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Free Speech in War Time

THE FIRST AMENDMENT to the Constitution provides: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press . . ." This is a very flat statement, and presumably those who framed it intended it to be so. Obviously there are limits to freedom of speech, but it is the general theory and practice both of American and British law that these limits shall as much as possible be defined in specific statutes and that they shall not go beyond prohibiting speech which is clearly libelous or injurious to some person, or is clearly calculated to result in immediate and active sedition. In both cases, moreover, the principle is that no one can be prosecuted for overstepping these limits until after he has done so. In other words one cannot be prosecuted because he is suspect, or because something he says indicates a tendency which may seem seditious to some minority or even to the majority of people. This whole attitude toward freedom of speech and the press is the result of a cumulative political experience of many centuries, and an experience which history shows governments disregard at their peril. Particularly in war time many people are likely to become impatient with this concept of liberty. Yet the Supreme Court of the United States has said categorically: "The Constitution of the United

States is a law for rulers and people, equally in war and in peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances."

In the last war, two departments of government were involved in the supervision of activities which might be considered seditious and dangerous to the security of the State. Perhaps because the Constitution is so specific with regard to the principle of freedom of speech and of the press, the function of suppressing "undesirable" periodicals was left in the hands of the Post Office Department. On the theory that use of the United States mails constitutes a *privilege* rather than a *right*, it was possible for this department to suppress a periodical by means of two simple expedients: mail addressed to the publication could be declared undeliverable, and the publication's second class privileges could be revoked, making it financially impossible for it to continue in business. This procedure was used against a total of approximately forty periodicals. A certain number of these were legitimately subject to suppression—papers openly published for a clientèle of German sympathizers in the United States, and openly sympathetic to the German cause. The rest were suppressed because they were critical of England, or because they were pacifist or (what amounted to the same thing) Socialist. After the war was over, it was generally agreed that papers in the latter categories should not have been molested, and that the treatment accorded them was high-handed and probably unconstitutional.

In the last war (as in this) the Department of Justice, then under Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory, was in charge of prosecutions for sedition. Unfortunately it was not until six months before the armistice that Mr. Gregory issued an administrative order preventing such prosecutions from being instituted by local district attorneys. The result was lamentable. Volunteer guardians of the national safety, encouraged by the Department of Justice, began spying on their neighbors in wholesale fashion with the result that about 2,000 persons were unjustifiably sent to prison for seditious utterances, and a régime of fear was instituted which, by scaring off legitimate criticism, contributed a great deal to our losing the peace.

Profiting by the experience of World War I, the present Administration has handled these problems with a great deal more wisdom. Periodicals actually belonging to enemy nationals have been taken over by the Treasury Department. In some cases they have continued publication under strict government supervision. No other papers have been molested or suppressed. No axis propaganda can accuse us of denying our citizens freedom of the press.

With regard to prosecutions for sedition, the present Attorney General, Mr. Biddle, two weeks

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after the declaration of war, made substantially the same ruling as Mr. Gregory found it wise to make after we had been in the last war about a year—namely, that no prosecutions for sedition can be instituted except on his own personal instructions. This has been done to avoid what Mr. Biddle knew to be a great danger under war-time conditions: "War threatens civil rights; and although we have fought wars before, and our personal freedoms have survived, there have been periods of gross abuse, when hysteria and hate and fear ran high, and when minorities were unlawfully and cruelly abused."

On another page in this issue of THE COMMONWEAL Mr. Michael Williams calls for a far more rigorous treatment of all journalistic dissent. The facts here recited indicate why we profoundly disagree with him. We feel that suppression of any periodicals which are not obviously and clearly the property of enemy nationals, or engaged in open and specific incitement to sedition (as distinguished from *opinions* which might be construed as seditious), would not only be giving aid and comfort to the enemy and bewildering Americans who cherish the Bill of Rights, but would also be embarking on a national policy which would involve endless practical difficulties and would do much to make impossible a decent peace once the war is over. If you start by suppressing *Social Justice*, where would you draw a line, demonstrable under any reasonable court procedure? (We have attacked and deplored *Social Justice* for years and have always wanted to see it converted or vanish, and still do.) You might end up with half the newspapers of the country out of business. And we must not do anything to lose another peace.

Mr. Williams asks for a Mitchell Palmer in preference to a Francis Biddle. Presumably Mr. Williams refers to Mr. Palmer's activities as Attorney General, starting after the war, in 1919. It was during the years when the Russian Revolution precipitated a wave of hysterical anti-alien feeling in the United States (from the after-effects of which Catholics would suffer later on) that Mr. Palmer headed the Department of Justice. The problem he faced was difficult, but he did nothing to improve it. He allowed selfish interests, which sought to make use of this hysteria to cripple the labor movement and to work against social reform, full rein. Under his jurisdiction the federal police instituted a real reign of terror, including acts of provocation of a sort to curdle the blood. To ask that such a régime should once again be allowed to capture the Department of Justice is to make a mockery of two of the four freedoms the President so constantly urges us to defend—freedom of speech and freedom from fear: these freedoms must be for "all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances," or they are not worth a red cent.

The Pressure for an Offensive

AMERICANS who have been clamoring that the United States take the offensive were among those most heartened by the news about General MacArthur. If Australia can be held, including its key cities and main bases, it can serve as the principal springboard for an offensive in the East. Just now MacArthur looks like the best bet to hold it. His assignment is primarily a defensive move, for Australia is not only the one remaining major base in the Pacific, but it is also an important allied source of wool, small arms and food.

There seem, in fact, to be several points which must be held at any cost if only for their raw materials. The Caucasus supplies 80 percent of the petroleum required by Russian mechanized agriculture and her motorized war machine. Fuel for the British forces in the Mediterranean and the Middle East comes principally from Iran, Iraq and islands off Arabia in the Persian Gulf, while India is an important source of cotton, jute, manganese, mica, cattle, small arms, and at the same time is a great barrier to the junction of the German and Japanese forces that might permit a heavy exchange of strategic materials between the two Axis powers. It is difficult to see how the United Nations can be expected to forego any effort to hold Australia, India and the Middle East. And this means focus on defense at least in these three areas.

On the other hand advocates of an immediate offensive can point to the new raw material situation as a pressing reason for a shift from the defensive. As a summary in *Business Week* indicates, control of many basic war materials has shifted so markedly since the war began that the assumption that there is any considerable period for building up an overwhelmingly powerful allied armament is no longer tenable. The Axis now calls the turn on rubber, tin, bauxite, potash; it has even gained preponderance in the production of rye and cement, while allied superiority in steel, coal, wood pulp, manganese and other war essentials has been cut drastically. Although the United Nations still enjoy preponderance in materials, the shift in resources lends weight to the proposal for an offensive now, before the Axis can make much of its extensive new sources of matériel.

There is one direction toward which these factors point. The United Nations, and America in particular, must make the most of what we have now. Probably long-range plant expansion must be sacrificed in favor of utilization of existing facilities to the utmost. We must think in terms of 1942 rather than of 1945. Key points cannot be defended, the Allies cannot take the offensive and the initiative, unless present production goes all out. Donald Nelson is right; time is of the essence.

Work Hours, and Work

THE COMPLAINTS of Donald M. Nelson about the level of war production and a wave of public messages to Congressmen have put great pressure behind moves to change federal labor laws and nationally enforced labor relations in general. The most important projected step seems to be toward a combined profit-limit and labor time-unlimited law. Clearly the thought is that production is being held down by the resistance of unions to overtime work, and that this resistance can be safely removed if a severe limitation on the earnings of capital is joined to the lengthening of the work week. It is doubtful, however, if the root of the production lag is any wage-hour or closed shop law.

The President's interview of March 17 showed that he does not think so. At present, the fact is that strikes are very few and are not interfering with armament manufacture to an appreciable extent. The Wage-Hour Law setting forty hours as the standard does not keep men from working more than forty hours a week. It is a basis for pay. And the President wisely pointed out that you cannot legislate a man to turn out more work at his job. It is a question of will and of efficiently operating organization.

Profit limitation and the forty-hour standard week are primarily financial problems. They bring up the questions of inflation and cost and price levels, and of the apportionment among workers and owners of business income. If a company has to pay its employees time and a half for time over forty hours in a week, and double time for Sundays, it is going to do all it can to raise the prices it gets for its products, and thus two inflationary forces are set in operation. Profit limitation, six percent or anything else, by itself doesn't mean much until profit is defined. It means so little that it is really impossible to talk about it except for propagandistic and probably demagogic purposes.

True, if wages are allowed to go very high and dividends on stock, together with the money firms are allowed to pay in interest and to retain for corporate purposes, are kept very low, then national income is channeled in the direction of employees. It would be much more complicated to do this equitably (as between different companies and industries) than newspaper discussion has yet hinted. Then too, the American people have not yet decided what they want to do with property ownership and how they want its privileges and duties adjusted to the privileges and duties of wage employment. Done most justly, however, it would still not solve the problem of inflation, nor the immediate one of full and continuous production. One of the grave elements of this whole world war is the indecisiveness of people about social rights and duties, specifically about the proportion of national income that

should go as a reward for weekly work at a job and as a payment for the use of protected private property. The war may indeed be a revolution or a counter-revolution aiming at resolving these questions, but stubborn and unsympathetic concentration on an isolated technical factor such as the book-keeping basis for wage rates will not win war or revolution. It must be noted that those who are so hotly eager to open shops and lengthen hours are not in reality working primarily on a war end. And the labor defense, from a politically exposed position, is in terms of political economy, not production.

Women and War

CURRENT projects and actions revolving about the relation of the country's women to the country's war invite us to clear our minds in regard to the general truths involved. Dear to the wife of the President is the plan for universal registration of all our women between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five, with a view to enabling the government "to analyze what labor is available," and also to encouraging women volunteers. Meanwhile, Representative Edith Nourse Rogers's bill creating a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps of 150,000, to perform duties behind the lines and thereby release men for combat, has passed the House by the very respectable majority of 249 to 86. There can be no objection to these or any similar projects in such an abnormal period of national need as the present, if they are furthered in a way which does not obscure the true reality. This reality is simply that women, in the mass, have duties and functions which are at the opposite pole from those of a military body, and even more important to civilization. That women have the will and the aptitude to do, or learn to do, anything that needs to be done to keep the country afloat in wartime, needs no proving. The periphery, so to speak, of the feminine group does represent a potential reserve which the nation can and should call upon in the struggle that is beginning to touch all our lives. But the core of the feminine group is and must remain the women on the home front; and this truth moreover must be respected and reflected in all the wartime thinking of the nation. If the enthusiasm for uniforms and the whole paraphernalia of military service, natural enough perhaps in the limited groups of women involved, were allowed to infect our general thinking about women, to the obscuring of their less picturesque but absolutely vital activity in the home, it would be a disaster indeed. Women as a group bear one vital, irremovable hazard; it is not wise for society to disturb the balance by giving them another. What the general, deep instinct about this is could be ascertained by polling the men in service, for instance, on the subject of women soldiers.

Dr. James J. Walsh

By WILFRID PARSONS

ON SUNDAY mornings, once a month about eleven o'clock, a telephone call would come from Dr. Walsh to the house where the editors of *America* lived. The call always followed the same ritual. "Father, have you got a moment to discuss a question that has been on my mind?" "Yes, Doctor; but why not come up to dinner tonight? Are you free?" "Why, yes; I'd be glad to. At six o'clock?" I knew that his wife was probably going out, and that he was going to be lonely. He was always pathetically surprised to be asked so suddenly; and we were always glad to have him.

He always did bring a problem he wanted to discuss in view of some new medical discovery that had been made and might have a moral bearing, or in connection with some of the many articles he was always writing for either a scientific or popular magazine. The discussions that followed were invariably interesting, even if, or maybe because, they kept no limited pattern. Dr. James J. Walsh's mind was big enough to take in pretty nearly everything, and his talk revealed that duality in him which was perhaps his most astonishing characteristic.

He was both a popularizer and a sound scientific scholar, and he seems to have kept those two achievements successfully apart from each other. The thousands of readers of his "Thirteenth Greatest of Centuries" were probably unaware that he was also the author of "Psychotherapy," and the medical users of the latter book were blissfully unconscious that he was also preoccupied in blasting the superstitions and fallacies of science. His name constantly appeared in nearly all the Catholic magazines of the country and Ireland and England, and at the same time he was a well-known contributor to the reviews that dealt with his specialty, psychotherapy.

His manner of writing was peculiar to himself. He would dictate a piece, usually twice as long as was needed. It was typed on an old-fashioned typewriter with triple-spaces, so that he could write corrections in between the lines. Then the article was re-typed, on the same triple spaces, so that the editor could have his innings. He had no pride of authorship whatever. On many occasions, when my blue pencil (as the layman calls it) had done its worst with his somewhat involved sentences, he would call me up and congratulate me on a fine job, without any irony at all. He was sincerely grateful to anybody who would improve what he wrote. What with speaking his articles instead of writing them, and what with the overwhelming spate of information that was apt to find itself within a single sentence, paragraphs

grew topheavy, and he had a sublime confidence in the editor to untangle them.

What he wrote was always read, and with relish. Father Francis Talbot, S.J., then literary editor and now editor in chief of *America*, once ran a competition to name the best ten writers among Catholics. Dr. Walsh's name led the rest, and by a good margin. He had an uncanny ability to judge reader interest, and no editor could ever complain that his contributions were not timely. Moreover, he had a challenging mind. He loved to contradict current convictions. He was constantly arguing, for instance, that alcohol, which he hated, is not a stimulant, but a narcotic, and he had the physiological knowledge to back up his contention. This was usually in private conversation. But in his writings he was equally on the lookout for some favorite idol to demolish. The very title he gave his best-known popular book, "Thirteenth Greatest of Centuries," was a flourish in the face of the smug twentieth century.

Crusading temper

This crusading temper of his really made his vocation in the scientific field. Beside psychotherapy, his other passion was history, and in particular the history of medicine. He is credited with having introduced that subject into the curricula of medical schools when he was connected with the short but glorious career of the Fordham University Medical School. One could realize from his writings on this subject that his every new discovery made him literally snort with joy. For he came very close to holding the universal proposition that every single new discovery in the field of medicine, and especially in therapeutics, had been made many centuries before and had been forgotten. And he very rarely missed the chance to point out, slyly or loudly, as the case might warrant, that the ancient discoverer was a Catholic, and most likely even a priest.

This brings me, in a somewhat rambling reminiscence, to a third passion of his life, and that was the Catholic Church and all its works, dogmas and personalities. It may be that critics will hold that this passion blinded him somewhat to the whole truth. It is true he was no cynic. In fact, he had that childlike simplicity of mind that we associate with G. K. Chesterton. But he always maintained his position: so many people are engaged in debunking the Church that somebody has to fill the other side of the scales. He was a debunker himself, one of the best of our times. But his debunking was limited to the debunkers, and their kin, the sciolists, who are so credulous of modern progress.

He was no indiscriminate admirer of the Church. His early training in philosophy and theology among the Jesuits had given him a sounder foundation in the sacred sciences than is

vouchsafed to most laymen. Though he left the Jesuit Order before ordination to the priesthood, he always maintained a profound devotion to it, and in his later years wrote an enthusiastic book, "These Wonderful Jesuits," in payment of what he regarded as a debt of gratitude. He never really severed his connection with Fordham University. After he was graduated from there in 1884 at the age of 19, he received from it the Master's degree, and, in later life, proudly listed his connection with its faculty on many books.

His apologetic for the Church was really very simple in its design, however arduous its execution must necessarily have been. It consisted in preaching to a scientific generation that the Catholic Church is the mother of science. Beginning with medicine, he explored many out-of-the-way corners of science. Everywhere he found little evidence of obscurantism, and instead, much evidence of free inquiry, and a multitude of details of triumphant scientific discovery achieved by churchmen. The gusto with which he reported his findings betrayed the almost unholy delight he took in confounding a generation that fondly imagined itself to be the originator and sole possessor of scientific truth, and all other generations merely ignorant. The Church owes a debt to the writings of this kindly arrogant man, whose great ambition in life it was to give Catholics some pride in their past and to humble the vanity of modern pseudo-historians.

He took great satisfaction in being an outstanding lay Catholic. As a result, his name will be found connected with every enterprise where laymen may find an outlet in the Church. He was a constant lecturer at the Catholic Summer School of America, of which he was also a trustee. He was one of the founders of the Calvert Associates, the original publishers of *THE COMMONWEAL*, and his name was for years on its masthead as a member of its Editorial Council, an associate. He was, of course, also one of the five indomitable editors of the "Catholic Encyclopedia" from start to finish of that great achievement, along with Herbermann, Pace, Shahan and Wynne.

He was probably at his best as a lecturer. His face in repose was probably as ugly a visage as was possessed by any of his contemporaries, but he had a way of lighting it up with such a winning smile as to give it enormous charm. He did this especially when he had to enunciate some difficult or unpleasant truth, and the smile, which was all of the eyes, was often his greatest argument. He was much in demand as a speaker, and it seems to me now that he was always just about to depart for some distant appearance, or just returning from one. He kept this up even after he had reached the age of seventy.

Concerning his medical achievements I have little direct knowledge. He was never one to tell

you about his other life if you did not discover it for yourself; but he also had a sort of quiet complacency in receiving congratulations that showed he had no vanity at all. I know that he was active in the New York County Medical Society and the Academy of Medicine. At meetings of the Catholic Physicians Guild in New York I had opportunity to witness the deep regard with which he was considered by his fellow-physicians, who also savored the Rabelaisian humor of the man when he was in the presence of his colleagues.

I have said nothing of his humor. He had it to the full. There was always hearty laughter at any of his lectures and in his conversation. In fact he wrote a book called "Laughter and Health." I never read it, but I imagine it was a kind of personal apologia. If there was any, even cryptic, comedy in a situation, or even in a doctrine, he was sure to ferret it out, and then exploit it to the utmost.

In his medical practice he must have been somewhat of a trial to his patients. He was fully convinced that most disorders are psychosomatic in origin. I do not suppose that he made the mistake of some doctors in attributing these disorders to the "imagination," for he was a very intelligent man. But he did assign a great therapeutic value to the will. He supplied the mental suggestion. But he always talked as if he required his patients to follow the suggestion with a little will power. He had a sound medical training: Pennsylvania in the '90's, Vienna, Berlin and Paris.

All that I have said of him, however, would be little if I left out what was really his deepest quality, the one that was closest to him. I mean his piety. It was not ostentatious. He never used it for anything else but the satisfaction of his own soul, and the healing of those souls who also brought their broken nerves to his office. Prayer, one felt if one knew him well, was the constant habit of his life, and the source at which he solved all his problems. As a result, his humility became an ingrained habit. It gave him an almost morbid fear of passing judgment on the motives of anyone. The honors that came to him—Knight Commandership of St. Gregory, Knighthood of Malta, the Laetare Medal, innumerable other medals and honorary degrees—he received with a touching gratitude, as if he was startled that anyone should think of him.

The honors were well deserved. He was a sort of one-man Catholic Action. He will be right at home with all the other apostles in heaven. I doubt very much if he ever wrote a book—more than fifty in forty years—or dictated an article—thousands of them—without at the same time thinking what good he wanted to do to those people who read him: doubting minds, or discouraged wills, or broken hearts. May his sweet soul rest in peace.

A Skirmish

An excerpt from a forthcoming book, "The Song of Bernadette."*

By Franz Werfel

VITAL DUTOUR, still thoroughly miserable with his cold, had had nothing but a cup of hot broth. Interrupting himself he went into his study the moment that Bernadette was announced. The light in this room was dim. But in the fireplace the flames danced and crackled about four logs of larch wood bigger than any Bernadette had ever seen. The State furnished its servants with excellent fuel as extra compensation. Since he had caught this heavy cold Dutour had had his desk moved nearer the fire. His back to the window, he now observed the delinquent through his lorgnon. He bade her approach the desk. His first impression was: perfectly normal. A proletarian child of this region, like a hundred others. Next he was struck by the poverty of Bernadette's garments and by the fact that her not ungraceful little figure seemed less clothed than swathed. First there was this queer *capulet*. Dutour, who had come to this region but recently and had no knowledge of the costumes of the peasantry, took it for a shawl such as was worn by the women of Madras. Yet this shawl was so faded that the ornaments on the hem were no longer recognizable. By throwing the round face into deep shadow the garment seemed to lend it a great charm. The formless smock fell to the very feet in their tiny wooden shoes. The whole figure was like a sculptor's work which the artist has put aside half finished. Every fold of the garment, the interplay of light and shade, all made the impression of something begun, uncompleted, indicated merely. The eyes, to be sure, those large, dark, hooded eyes, were anything but tentative in character. Despite himself the prosecutor recognized them as the eyes of a woman harboring a great love. Not rarely had he met such women's eyes in the courtroom, clear, alert eyes, eyes sharply on guard to defend a possession of the heart.

"Do you know who I am, my child?" the bald-headed man began the interview, nervously pulling his stiff cuffs forth from his sleeves.

"Oh, yes," Bernadette answered slowly. "Monsieur Callet told me that you were the imperial prosecutor."

"And do you know what kind of man that is?" Bernadette leaned gently against the desk and

looked at Dutour attentively. "Not quite, no."

"Let me explain to you, my dear child. His Majesty the Emperor of the French, who is the sovereign of us all, has placed me here to see to it that any wrong done be discovered and expiated, such, for instance, as lies and fraud which someone may perpetrate against his neighbor. . . . Now do you quite understand who I am?"

"Oh, yes, you're much the same as Monsieur Jacomet."

"A good deal more. I'm his superior officer. He hunts down the criminals and swindlers. Then he sends them to me that I may turn them over to the courts and the penitentiary. You will be examined by Monsieur Jacomet on this very day. I've summoned you here, however, not because I'm Monsieur Jacomet's superior officer, but because I'm sorry for you and desire to warn and to help you. If, in fact, you tell me the whole truth and act sensibly, I may be able to spare you the examination by Monsieur Jacomet. Let us see what can be done for you."

The girl's eyes, intent upon defending a great love, looked very guardedly at the man's face. He lowered his voice a little.

"A great tumult has been caused by your small self in this town. Doesn't it fill you with any fear and dread? I ask you in all seriousness, Bernadette: do you intend to go to Massabielle again tomorrow morning?"

Bernadette did not prevent her eyes, so tranquil as a rule, from sudden flaming. "Of course, I must go twelve times more to the grotto," she answered immediately. "The lady desires it, and I have promised."

"Now there you go with this lady," Dutour said in a disappointed tone, as though he had expected better of the girl. "You'll admit, my child, that you're not clever and very ignorant. You're the worst pupil in the whole school. The court, you see, is informed. You can't deny that all your schoolmates, even far younger ones, excel you in reading, writing, arithmetic, and even in religion."

"That is true, Monsieur. I am very stupid."

"You admit, then, that your schoolmates are brighter than you. Now reflect, my child. How is it about the grown-ups? And how is it especially about those among the grown-ups who have spent years in studying and possess whatever knowledge is to be had in this world? I'm thinking of people

* Viking. \$3.00. To be published May 11.

like Father Pomian and myself, for instance. Now we, who ought to know, assure you that this lady whom you say you see is a childish bit of imagination and an absurd dream. . . ."

"The first time I saw the lady," Bernadette said, "I thought too that it must be a dream. . . ."

"There you are, my girl. That wasn't so stupid. But now you reject the advice of old and learned men!"

Bernadette smiled her deep womanly smile. "Once you can mistake a dream for reality, not six times."

Vital Dutour listened sharply. What a striking answer! Hallucinations differ from dreams, evidently. He, who was no great dreamer before the Lord, had to venture out into unknown territory. "It happens that one has the same dream repeatedly."

"But I do not dream," Bernadette declared vividly. "This very morning I saw the lady exactly as one sees other people. And I spoke with her exactly as one speaks with others."

"Let's drop that for a moment," Dutour parried. In this matter of the supernatural he felt at a distinct disadvantage before the delinquent. "Tell me how you people live at home; I mean, how things are going with you."

Bernadette gave her account with the frankness of the simple poor, uninhibited by middle-class pride or reticence. "Till ten days ago it was very bad, Monsieur. We had nothing to eat except corn-mush. But now Mamma works for Madame Millet three times a week and Papa has a job with Monsieur Cazenave. . . ."

The prosecutor gave evidence of great satisfaction at this account. "So this lady of yours seems to have her practical side. What is this story about Madame Millet?"

Bernadette gave him a long look before she replied: "I don't know what you mean, Monsieur."

"Oh, yes, you do, my child. Remember, the court knows everything, everything. You're concealing the fact that you're living with Madame Millet."

"That is not true. I don't live there any longer. I slept there only two nights, last Thursday and Friday."

"Nevertheless, you were a guest in one of the richest and most luxurious houses in Lourdes. You would never have entered it without your lady."

Bernadette made so vigorous a gesture that her hood fell and revealed her dark hair. "Madame Millet called for me and begged Mamma to let me be her guest. I did it to give her pleasure, not myself. It was no great pleasure to me."

"How about the white silk dress?" the prosecutor asked sharply.

"I never wore it. It's in Mademoiselle Latapie's clothes closet."

The imperial prosecutor arose and pushed back his armchair. "Be careful, Bernadette. You see that the court knows everything. The court knows about the presents which everybody sends you and your parents. If the court were to conclude that your lady represents an excellent and profitable business scheme, you would be lost, destroyed. . . . But I offer you my hand in helpfulness. I'm willing to save you even the examination by Jacomet, which is the first step toward imprisonment. What I ask is simple enough. I am not asking you to abjure or retract anything. Promise that you will obey me, for I represent the court by whose pursuit you are threatened."

"If I can do so, Monsieur, I will obey you," Bernadette said, unperturbed.

"Then put your hand in mine and promise that you will go to the grotto no more."

Bernadette withdrew her hand, as though she had touched fire. "That I cannot promise, Monsieur. I must fulfil the lady's wish."

Vital Dutour's nether lip shot out. "So you reject my help. Consider well. This is my last warning."

Bernadette's head drooped a little. Her face flushed slightly. "I must go twelve times more to the grotto," she whispered.

To his own astonishment, Dutour found it hard to keep his self-control. "We're through, then!" he almost roared. "I need keep you no longer. You are intent upon your own destruction. . . ."

Left alone, he felt thoroughly ashamed. Court practice had accustomed him to cheap victories through his position of antecedent advantage. There he had dealt with contrite and broken souls who whined for mercy. "I am stretching out my hand to you to save you." That was a prosecuting attorney's standing phrase which never failed of its effect. Usually the accused would reply to it with flattered tears. The girl had shed no tear. In spite of the proffered poisoned mixture of threats and helpfulness, tried innumerable times and never known to have failed, the girl had remained obdurate. Worse, worse, instead of his having shaken the girl in her assurance, she had shaken him out of his. Thus the result of this examination was a flat moral aftertaste which applied to his own life. For several minutes he knew with complete awareness that the reproach of opportunism which he had hurled at this poor starveling applied overwhelmingly to himself. What was his entire so-called career but a pliant betting on whatever tendency seemed to prevail? Strange how this girl really had something to defend, though it was but a phantom of her mind. By that, by virtue of that mere phantom, she was securer of moral quality than he. What he defended meant nothing to him. Today his name was Napoléon; yesterday it had been called Louis Philippe; tomorrow it might bear the name of Bourbon or

even of some intriguing lawyer. The State with a capital S. Ha ha. . . .

Frightened, he faced his mirror. A subaltern face grinned back, a morose paper face with a red and swollen nose in the middle. And so it actually happened that the imperial prosecutor really

poked out his tongue in derision at his own mirrored image. Then he consoled himself: Jacomet will manage the matter; Jacomet is a tougher customer than I.

With this hope in his heart he swallowed his medicine and went to bed.

Armchair Husbandry

A record crop of new farm and garden books makes it easier than ever this spring.

By Edward Skillin, Jr.

AN UNFAILING recipe for a good appetite in these mid-Lenten days is one of the new seed catalogues. Henderson's "Everything for the Garden" is a good one. It is not only the striking full-color portrait of "Richmeat—the largest and meatiest" tomato, but the well-rounded lineaments of such products as "Tendersweet" carrots, "Cream-O-Gold" corn with its cob of pencil sveltness, "Riviera" broccoli, "Starbright" strawberries, start the saliva flowing. Thumbing through so tempting a series of vistas of fruits, vegetables and flowers also sets the thoughts flying countrywards. It is easy to daydream about the garden you always meant to plant or that place in the country with its vines and birds and fruit blossoms you always wanted. And if it is a heavenly, early-spring day and you are out of doors, you don't even need a catalogue.

If you live in the suburbs, you can often do a lot about that garden feeling. Not always. Sometimes, as in my case, the obstacles are too formidable. Scampering rabbits and grey squirrels are always ready to pounce on the first green shoots of any edible but tomatoes. The oaks that tower above our modest subdivision provide too much shade for growing vegetables anyway. Even so the soil bakes hard, and out back where leaves and grass cuttings have been burned—and an unsuccessful attempt at gardening took place during the last war—the ground is undoubtedly too acid.

This compounding of excuses looks even more convincing when the measly result of last year's baker's dozen of tomato plants is taken into account. But it all reminds me of the preface to one of the books which form the basis for this article; the author refers to "memories of childhood hours spent in thinning carrots while the crash of ball against bat could be heard in the lot over the fence." With me the ball game is a full block away and the detonation is not audible. Yet I know the thought of the impact of frayed lamb's gut on worn-smooth tennis balls would always be

there to haunt me. Somehow or other the ancient court game provides a more inviting balance for hours spent chained to office desk or domestic morris chair than the consistent pursuit of bugs and weeds. Another year if the utilization of such an unpromising food source is really needed, it may be a different story.

Whether your interest in the subject is romantic or you really mean to do something about it, there never was a spring with so many people ready in book form to give advice on how to raise things. There are a few new books on "Victory Gardens," but the inspiration of most of the new ones seems quite different. There is no food shortage yet—these books don't deal with sugar beets—and the history of one of the biggest sellers in garden books points elsewhere. "Five Acres and Independence"¹ was published seven years ago. During its first five years it had a modest sale. But as the war grew closer, sales shot up. In 1941 sales totaled 38,000, with 17,000 for the first three months of this year. Few best sellers are doing better than that today. Are people fearful of air raids, or are they simply trying to get away from it all? And how many older men and women from businesses shut down by the war are ready to put some savings in that little country place they've thought about for so long? Whatever the explanation, American publishers indicate terrific confidence in the market for farm and garden books this season. What follows deals with five current volumes; the March 7 *Publishers' Weekly* describes at least a dozen more, including "Grow a Garden and Be Self-Sufficient," by Ehrenfried Pfeiffer and Erika Riese of biodynamics fame.

A farming preacher

Quite in the spirit of the thing, the Literary Guild has chosen "Old McDonald Had a Farm"²

¹ Five Acres and Independence. M. G. Kains. Greenberg. Revised. \$2.50.

² Old McDonald Had a Farm. Angus McDonald. Houghton. \$2.75.

as an April selection. It is such a charming story, such an engaging picture of a picturesque Oklahoma minister of 25 years ago, that it is hard to recognize at first the book's connection with the land movement. Yet the author, his son Angus, says of the doughty Reverend McDonald that "he hated gullies worse than he hated the Devil." He preached sound agriculture as well as evangelical Christianity wherever he went. The bulk of his story deals with his struggle to make of the worst eroded and most unpromising farm he could find the model homestead of the countryside. He fought with rocks, drought, flood, the taunts of his neighbors, despite failing strength, and within four years had everyone admitting he was right. How he did it is an instructive narrative on sound diversified farming, but it is so readable, and the obstinate old man, for all his sharp trading and unyieldingness, so lovable, that a more delightful introduction to the subject of farming could hardly be found. The one long sermon that is reproduced is distinctly Protestant, but the picture of the McDonalds has far wider than sectarian interest. It is an ideal introduction to armchair husbandry, if not to something more personally energetic.

How to Garden and to Farm

"How to Grow Food for Your Family"³ is a step further along the path to serious intentions. It is based on a decade of experience on the unpromising soil of Vermont and is planned and adjusted for other climes as well. The author makes it all sound very reasonable. If you become at all proficient, you can raise what you need for a family of five (fresh vegetables plus what you can or store for winter use) on a plot 50 x 75 feet. When you know how, only four man-hours of work per week are required *on the average* from April to August. Even though the work load is much heavier during certain weeks, that shouldn't interfere with too many games of tennis. The cash value of the crop—to which must be added the joys of garden-fresh dinners, improved health from exercise and better fare, especially the strong psychological satisfactions—is, if you are successful, around \$140, the cost of the first year's tools, fertilizer, seeds, sets, anti-pest dusts less than \$40.

Mr. Ogden is most persuasive. He devotes much attention to preparing the soil and to the all-important art of compost. He advises growing what is most economical (what isn't cheap to buy). He dubs our much-prized corn, lima beans and peas the least rewarding for the time, space and energy involved in producing them. His picture of the insect pests lying in wait and the lengths needed to overcome them is rather terrify-

ing. And one of the nicest features of his apparently sound compendium is the suggestion of palatable dishes that put home-grown vegetables to good use: parsnip stew, baked salsify, brown lettuce, French fried onions, cabbage cups and fried green tomatoes.

Perhaps the most striking thing about Walter Magnes Teller's "Farm Primer"⁴ is the space devoted to animal husbandry. Because of this, it makes a good companion volume to Mr. Ogden's. Mr. Teller's book is much less informal; it embodies much more of a brass tacks approach. The author in practically every case lists a free pamphlet, such as "Determining the Age of Animals by the Teeth," on the problem at hand or refers to the best books on the subject. He waxes enthusiastic on Morrison's "Feeds and Feeding." He tells of the free correspondence courses in everything from Home Vegetable Gardening to Dressing and Curing Meat available at most of the 48 state land grant colleges. This "Manual for the Beginner and Part-Time Farmer" obviously means business.

A brief appendix includes some fascinating things. It begins with a time table of chores exclusive of household duties. A cow, for instance, requires two or three feedings of 12 minutes each daily, water from a drinking cup for from five to ten minutes, a daily cleaning or grooming of eight minutes (except in summer when she is grazing), a quarter hour for cleaning stall and bedding, and two 20-minute milking periods. Two goats require about 40 percent less time. It tells you how to find the number of board feet in a log, how to find the height of a tree or building, how to figure when the various animals will give birth, how to calculate the number of gallons in a keg or barrel and many other handy accomplishments.

Mr. Teller barks out his advice in staccato style. His wisdom is so compressed that if you want to learn how to do something you cannot skip a sentence, much less one of his short paragraphs. But his love of animals will out. Here are a few of his engaging comments: "A single cow does not become lonely. It is easier to keep a cow healthy if she has no contact with other cattle. The family cow depends on the family for companionship. She becomes a pet and gentler as she grows older. A Jersey becomes especially gentle." "Goats like company and thrive better in pairs than alone. They suffer more from homesickness than other farm animals." "Sheep graze and distribute their droppings evenly. Their little hoofs drive the manure into the soil and thereby improve it. For this reason they are known as the animal with the golden hoof. . . . The sheep is the most defenseless and harmless of all domestic animals. Only by the appreciation of this

³ How to Grow Food for Your Family. Samuel R. Ogden. Barnes. \$2.00.

⁴ The Farm Primer. Walter Magnes Teller. McKay. \$2.50.

fact can the nature of sheep be understood." Mr. Teller also recommends a radio in the cow barn for milking time. Also the female rabbit seems deadlier than the male. So with all his intentness on serious farming, the experienced Mr. Teller has his human side.

A disturbing diagnosis

There are armchair agriculturists who are primarily interested in the social side of the problem. For them the diagnosis in "Ill Fares the Land"⁵ is highly recommended. Carey McWilliams's latest book makes disturbing reading. The farm picture resulting from "factories in the fields," as he puts it, cries for readjustment, and his evidence is weightily documented. Much of his findings are based directly on the findings of the Tolan and La Follette committees investigating migratory labor. The rest of his evidence seems equally authentic. It is epitomized in the words of Mr. Beecher of the Farm Security Administration before the Tolan committee: "An agricultural economy which on the one hand uproots people from the land where for generations they have quietly lived, worked and died, and on the other hand hounds them from one brief drudgery to the next over the face of the earth, is, to say the least, no economy at all in human terms."

It is not merely a California problem. Mr. McWilliams shows how the iniquitous system of impersonal industrialization of the American farm—few of the big commercial growers exercise any responsibility for the thousands of hands they have to have in a hurry, but for only a few days each year—leads to the depths of poverty, disease, demoralization in Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, New Mexico, Colorado, Ohio, Indiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Michigan, Florida, New Jersey, Georgia, and many other states. And of them all Texas is castigated as the very worst. I wonder if the author of the lyrics for "Deep in the Heart of Texas" had any idea as to the real conditions there. Here are a few figures: During 1939 and 1940 Texas families on WPA got \$41.75 a month. But there were some 70,000 needy families trying to exist on a surplus commodity ration of \$3.88 a month, others got old age pensions of \$8.88 a month, and families on local relief received only \$7.47 per month. "So far as public health is concerned, Texas spends slightly less than 3½ cents per person per year: approximately the same amount that it spends for the protection of the health of cattle, sheep, goats, mules, pigs and horses—as much for a pig as a person."

One of the most disturbing features of the whole report is the incidence of social and other

diseases and demoralization and terrific adult and child mortality among the migratory workers in state after state throughout the Union. Education for the children in these families is virtually impossible, and only 10 percent of certain groups of Mexican workers have any contact with the Church. Three-room shacks housing 23 people in Ohio vie with migrant labor camps on the shores of Lake Michigan—where the average is eight men, women and children in a small room—and a \$4 a week barrack room in the Florida Everglades (where as many as ten people have been herded in a room 12 by 14 feet with only two windows) for the dubious distinction of the worst rural living conditions the country over.

Mr. McWilliams's book is primarily an arraignment that more than once makes American democracy sound like a hollow phrase. Yet if we are to have a sound morale during the difficult days ahead, the evils must be faced squarely; it is more important than ever today that they be remedied. The author's suggestions are primarily along legislative lines. He accepts the basic food factory system. "I personally feel that the revolution in agriculture has only commenced and that, in the long run, 'the chances of the small farmer seem about equal to the chances of the hand looms in 1800.'" How does this view differ from the industrial *laissez-faire* that led to depression and totalitarianism? Again, "migration is not an evil *per se*, it is not only inevitable, but in many cases highly desirable." Despite a bow toward the big cooperative farm, his remedy then chiefly is rural planning and zoning legislation, regulation by law of migrant employment, etc. He believes it a national problem requiring national measures.

The principal remedy

In "Forward to the Land"⁶ Mr. Peterson has a different solution for the problem—and his book goes well with McWilliams's, as it is concerned primarily with the remedy. His slogan is, "Soil-ways vs. moneyways." He believes that democracy is a way of owning property, that an agricultural nation is hard to defeat in war, that now "too many people are too far from their base of supplies." And he focuses his comments on actual conditions and promising possibilities in Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas.

Mr. Peterson wonders how any business or factory that is idle most of the year could expect to make a go of things. He points out, however, that only 30 days a year are required for the entire process of producing wheat mechanically today, while a cotton crop is only two months' work. No wonder these producers have to have government subsidies.

To be a success at farming you must work a

⁵ Ill Fares the Land. Carey McWilliams. Little. \$3.00.

⁶ Forward to the Land. Elmer T. Peterson. University of Oklahoma. \$3.00.

good part of the day all year round. This means live-at-home farming with every feasible kind of fruit, vegetable, livestock. He maintains that this kind of husbandry means better living. Farm families expending only \$5 in cash per month have a better living than a city family can achieve on \$75 a month. The record of the Farm Security Administration in extending loans to 800,000 American families to enable them to set up farms of this kind bears him out. People react best to the opportunity to help themselves. He also cites the extraordinary results of the "Plant to Prosper" movement near Memphis, Tenn., for production, not money, is wealth. He cites case after case where WPA cash wages have ruined good, self-respecting farmers. "The best and most incurable capitalist [*sic*] is a farmer on his own forty acres." "The land is the one sure thing," and it must be remembered that it costs \$800 to feed a family of five for a year.

For Mr. Peterson the spread between production cost and consumer price is another symbol of the unsoundness of the commercialization of

American agriculture. "There is no sense in a \$2.50 steak." He believes that the family farm growing its own food and feed is the solution, particularly if the farmer goes back to semi-processing. And in the years to come farm chemurgy, or producing raw materials for industry, will provide additional cash. Mr. Peterson makes a convincing case for Forward (not back) to the Land.

Only one of these five new books, then, fails to hold up diversified cultivation along somewhat biodynamic lines, as opposed to commercialized one-crop, cash-crop farming, as the best means of utilizing the gifts of the soil. The evidence seems unmistakable that even in war time, which deepens the productivist trend toward large holdings, "suit-case farmers," absentee ownership, tenantry and sharecropping, dispossession, migratory farm labor, agricultural unemployment, demoralization, more and more intelligent people are thinking in terms of the family farm. When peace comes at long last, resettlement on family-type farms will be even more important.

Scorched Earth in Dakota

A prairie fire and a feed barn
that wouldn't be rebuilt.

By T. D. Lyons

WHEN we finished cutting the six sections of wheat on the Big Place, the third week in August had come. My father was anxious to get a machine to start threshing immediately, but John Windedahl, who ran the flat-house at St. Mary's, insisted that the stacks must go through the "sweat," claiming that any omission in this line might result in shriveled berries, cutting the grade to below No. 1 hard. My father reluctantly acceded to this opinion, but said that the great danger of losing the fruit of all the hard work and good luck lay in the hazard of heavy rains and rotting stacks, or extreme dry weather and destruction by prairie fire. He finally decided to get two "machines" started as early as possible, in September, and contracted with Bill Campbell and Gunder Serns to thresh simultaneously. Bill Campbell had a Buffalo Pitts separator and steam-engine, and his fame extended from Oklahoma Territory, where he started threshing in early June, to Winnipeg, where he wound up the season just as the time came for snow to fly. He ordinarily "knocked out" 1,500 bushels of wheat before daylight in the short fall days, and the ordinary farmers were hard put to prevent him from keeping his boast—that he would run the grain on the plowed ground if they did not have a wagon-box under his separator spout.

Gunder Serns had a J.I.C. Minneapolis threshing rig; he was not a professional, skilled thresher like Bill Camp-

bell, but was a substantial farmer, on a large scale, and something of a local statesman. As the nominee of the Populists, Farmers' Alliance Republicans and Democrats, he had been elected State Senator, and came often to my father's Big Place for a pow-wow.

Shortly after the middle of September, one Sunday forenoon, Bill Campbell drove up with his six mules hitched to a democrat wagon, stopped at the water tank and signaled his presence by a fine rendition of his Comanche war whoop with which he invariably encouraged his threshing crew to greater efforts. He saw my father's team of grey McNairs hitched to a wagon wheel, so he alighted and went on into the ranch kitchen where he advised my father that he would wind up in the Seven Day Advent settlement on the following Sunday (which he explained was their Monday) and would arrive at the Big Place between dark on Sunday and dawn on Monday. He told my father that his crew had had enough Seven Day Advent "chow" (non-meat diet) to last them for twenty years, and that he had promised them a big meal of ham and eggs and corn-beef at the Big Place at whatever hour of the day or night they pulled into a "setting." A setting, of course, is a group of six or eight stacks of harvested grain—bundles, when cut by the binder, loose like hay when cut by the header. My father assured Bill that the Big Place would redeem his promise.

The next day word came from Gunder Serns that he was heading toward the Big Place and my father announced that all must be ready for the thrashers by the following Saturday. I have never understood the insistence of the allegedly educated on the pronunciation and spelling "threshers." Both the "Century Dictionary" and the "Standard" give "thrasher" as a valid word, meaning "thresher." So does Webster's "New School and Office Dictionary." Bill Campbell and Gunder Serns would both have been insulted if any of their intimates had referred to them as "threshers." A Chicago expert, who used that pronunciation in a trial before a Jim River jury, was blamed for losing the case thereby.

A lot of horse

My father gave his directions to George Davidson, the boss of the Big Place. He figured there would be about 60,000 bushels of grain to be hauled from the two machines to the elevator at Redstone and the Flat House at St. Mary's. This would require 50 teamsters. One hundred and twenty big horses were groomed, as my father figured that about 20 replacements would be necessary, due to lameness or shoulder gall. Sixty sets of big harness passed in review before Charlie Henderson, the Redstone harness-maker, who came out to the Big Place with his assistants and, with plenty of new leather, put all the harness sets in first-class shape. All our big, wide-tire wagons were overhauled; axles were greased, tongues and neck-yokes inspected, wagon boxes and end-gates tested, so that no stream of grain would be seen flowing through them onto the public highway; nor was the commissary overlooked.

The ranch house at the Big Place, with the exception of the lean-to kitchen, was put at the disposal of Mrs. John Anderson and her corps of skilled female Swedish assistants. Mrs. Anderson's name was spoken reverently by lumberjacks in the north woods, who came every year to help with harvest and thrashing in Dakota. Her famous dish was "oatmeal," which she boiled for not less than seven hours. She insisted on having original, undoctored, non-breakfast food, ground whole oats; and my father procured five barrels of it, at some expense, from Reid, Murdoch & Co. of Chicago. She said this was real Swedish oatmeal, and, indeed, it was a delicacy, especially when covered with melted butter and New Orleans Black-Strap molasses, as she recommended. Of course, some stuck to the old-fashioned sugar and milk. In any event, it was delicious. The Redstone Mercantile Company was drawn on for 500 pounds of cured ham and bacon, a barrel of corn-beef, 50 pounds of butter, 200 pounds of sugar, and 100 pounds of ground Arbuckle's and Lion coffee. These two brands were the favorites, and rivals, and the supporters of each had to be considered in making the big wash-boiler full of coffee, which stood constantly on the kerosene stove in the lean-to, day and night, throughout the thrashing. Mrs. Anderson put the ground coffee into 5-pound cheese-cloth bags; every two hours these were fished out of the wash-boiler with wooden pliers and fresh bags of coffee put in. Teamsters, separator men, water monkeys and thrashing-engine firemen were coming and going at all hours of the night and day, so there was always hot coffee on tap, and sandwiches for anyone who wanted them.

As Bill Campbell and Gunder Serns were each the autocrat of his thrashing crew, and had exclusive jurisdiction up to the point at which the red wheat berries ran

out of the separator-spout into the wagon-box, likewise my father was absolute dictator from that point on, and, of course, of all general matters at the Big Place. In my father's absence, it was positively and clearly understood that George Davidson exercised the powers of a consul, and no ties of blood or friendship in any person authorized any questioning of George's orders. My father, during the tense period of thrashing, made his headquarters in a buck-board, drawn by the magnificent McNairs. This team were the colts of two registered Morgan mares, full sisters, whose merits had been the subject of an article in the *Breeder's Gazette*. Their sire was George M. Stratton's famous stallion, Sultan Saladin. George M. had paid a fabulous price for this pacing thoroughbred, and did not like to be reminded of it. One day, as he drove the beautiful chestnut animal in front of the Palmer House in Redstone, the proprietor, Mr. Cyrus Clark, in order to tease him, called out, "George M., what did you give for that Jay Gould-Jim Fiske stud-horse?" George M. answered tartly, "Gave my note." Mr. Clark shielded his long patriarchal white beard with his hand, squirted a stream of tobacco-juice toward Sultan's shining nigh fore-foot, and answered calmly, "Cheap enough, by Judas Priest, George M., cheap enough."

My father kept no regular hours during the thrashing, but drove continually from Redstone to St. Mary's and back, and to the sites of the two machines on the Big Place. Wherever he ended up at midnight he stayed until dawn. He endeavored to spend every other night in the lean-to, off the kitchen at the Big Place, where he could confer with George Davidson, Bill Campbell, Gunder Serns and others, and utilize the night hours for making all necessary repairs and preparations for the following day. Twenty kerosene lanterns were kept in commission, in the machine shed, where a 52-gallon barrel of kerosene was on tap in the corner. There was a strict rule, however, against filling lanterns except in daylight. At a previous thrashing, someone whose identity was never established started a dangerous fire by drawing kerosene by lantern-light. Only George Davidson's heroic efforts, so my father said, kept the whole place from being burned up.

Delays

The Sunday fixed by Bill Campbell for pulling into a "setting" on the Big Place came and went, but neither Bill Campbell nor Gunder Serns showed up. A messenger from Bill brought the word that a disgruntled stack-pitcher had shoveled stones into his separator, wrecking some of the cylinders; that new parts were en route by express from Chicago, and that it might be a full week before he would reach the Big Place to commence thrashing. My father was plainly dismayed. He had not expected Gunder Serns to be there promptly, but he had counted on Bill. He told George Davidson, confidentially, that he was worried. There had been no rain for almost ten weeks; the prairies were brown. The customary autumn haze hung over the horizon. There was "that nameless pathos in the air which dwells with all things fair." The wheat stubble was turning white, and a September frost was yellowing the corn leaves. But the deep dust on the roads and in the pasture left no doubt of the correctness of what had become almost a neighborhood greeting, "It is getting pretty dry."

George Davidson had heard of right-of-way fires, started by sparks from the Northwestern's locomotives,

which had created a minor panic before they were controlled. Fortunately the high prairie winds had not commenced. My father's anxious look changed to genuine cheerfulness when Uncle Will and Cousin Pat Lyons drove in from Prairie Queen and Lake Badus. Pat Lyons was a professional thrasher himself, and had ended his Lake County season. Uncle Will reported that the Prairie Queen section had a great season: oats went 80 bushels to the acre; barley, 60 bushels, and potatoes were yielding 150 bushels of early Ohios per acre. He said that the 400 acres of corn ground would yield 30,000 bushels of corn, and that he would have fat Chester white hogs and short-horn cattle ready for the Chicago Christmas market. "But," he ended, "I thought Lake County was dry, but it is nothing to this. A high wind would sweep a fire over the prairie and stubble like it did in '79. That fire, Dick, you remember, was twelve miles wide and thirty feet in length; the town of Sioux Falls came very near going up in smoke." My father spoke reassuringly of the wide fire-brakes of plowed land, around each of the "settings." Then a messenger came from Bill Campbell saying he and his crew would be on hand for supper, and bustle and excitement immediately became the order of the day.

Bill's men demanded oatmeal, as the opening supper dish, and Mrs. Anderson scored a magnificent success in supplying them. After supper they departed to sleep in the straw piles left from last year's thrashing. Bill himself and his engineer and separator-man always slept in the shadow of the machine. At about 3:30 in the morning of the next day, my brother and I reached the Big Place with some extra wagons from the Lars Morstad farm, near Howard, the county seat of Miner County. It had been a tiring, slow night trip of about twenty-two miles, with five wagons and ten horses, over uncertain roads—a part of the time in pretty thick darkness. George Davidson was in the machine shed, and helped us "put up" the teams. He was much tickled by a story my father had told Gunder Serns during the night pow-wow in the lean-to. State Senator Serns had brought up the names of Alec McKenzie and Jud LaMoure, two famous Dakota Territory figures. Mr. McKenzie was the representative (lobbyist) for the Northern Pacific, according to the tale, and Mr. LaMoure was Speaker of the House of Representatives. My father, Tom Walsh, Will Sterling and R. F. Pettigrew, with many others, had journeyed in the winter to Bismarck, to attend a meeting called by Mr. LaMoure, at which McKenzie was to impart matters of public importance concerning railroad building. There were bunks and cots in all the rooms of the little one-story hotel, including the dining-room where the legislative committee assembled.

After calling the meeting to order, Mr. LaMoure stretched out on one of these bunks, and it was self-evident that he proposed to snatch forty winks. A rather pompous member of the committee protested against this undignified procedure, saying it was unfair to men who had traveled from all over the territory to this important meeting. He added, "Alexander McKenzie, the representative of the Great Northern Pacific System, will soon be here, and what will he think if he sees the chairman fast asleep?" Delegate-in-Congress Pettigrew winked at my father, and it was evident that the protester did not understand the close working agreement between Jud LaMoure, a Republican, and Alec McKenzie, a Democrat. Mr. LaMoure's countenance did not betray surprise, or any other emotion. He merely said, dryly, "Well, I am going to take a nap; I was up all night play-

ing poker with those gentlemen from Southern Dakota. I am a bit fatigued and, also, my purse is a little lean." Then, with a kindly smile, he added, "I think Alec will understand. Wake me up when he gets his check-book out." My father added that Alec McKenzie had about as magnetic a personality as any man he had ever encountered, in spite of a somewhat flexible moral code when it came to influencing legislatures. Mr. McKenzie came to grief later, in Alaska, over the matter of gold placer mining claims. Judge Thomas Lyons (no kin of our family, though we would be proud to claim him) was reported to have sentenced the great man to jail for some of his proceedings.

Fire

When my brother and I came out of the stable, west of the windmill, where we had put up the teams, Cousin Pat was waiting at the water tank with a gallon syrup bucket full of hot coffee, and it tasted grand out of our tin cups. After a moment of conversation, we were surprised to see Cousin Pat climb up the windmill tower. A light wind was blowing, and the wheel was turning pretty fast. In the darkness, it looked as if he were about to do something to interfere with the wheel, which would, of course, have been dangerous, but any doubt on the matter was suddenly resolved by a strange, unnatural quality in Cousin Pat's voice as he said, "Tom, I think you had better call your father." But there was no need to call my father. We saw the screen door to the lean-to open, there was a flare of a match, and there was my father, bare-footed, wearing trousers and undershirt, lighting a cigar. The flame of the match threw a clear light on his big golden brown mustache and his big white hat. Westerners of his type always felt dressed if they had on the big hat, and somewhat uncomfortable with it off.

My father said, very quietly, "What is it, Pat?" Uncle Will, dressed only in underclothes, appeared with him at the windmill.

Pat's voice was very quiet. He said, "Dick, I smell fire."

My father turned to George Davidson and said, "Let's hook up teams to the thrasher's water-tanks. Do not call anyone yet but Bill Campbell."

As we started bringing out the teams which we had not unharnessed, Bill Campbell and his separator man were climbing the windmill tower. Uncle Will said, "The wind is rising. The fire-breaks are not to be depended on. Dick, if you are going to save these six sections of wheat stacks, you will have to sacrifice the pasture (one section), the hunt section, and burn off the school section, too, with a back-fire." My father did not hesitate, but formed the teamsters into squads under the command of George Davidson, Uncle Will and Pat. All hands were summoned. Bill Campbell shouted from the windmill tower for his men to hitch his six mules to his democrat spring-wagon. He came down from the tower and spoke, in a low tone, to my father. He said, "I could hear the sound of a horse galloping; I judge it is someone from Tom Morgan's place (four miles northeast); I'll bet they can see the flame from his windmill. I think I will drive my mules over there, just to see that none of them get caught."

By the time Bill reached the pasture gate, across Rock Creek, half a mile away, Tom Morgan had dismounted and opened the gate. Bill did not stop for a parley, but

yelled to Tom that he was driving to his place and would see that all were in safety. Tom had come with the news of seeing the flames, and to implore aid. A word of conversation with the experienced pioneers convinced him that, in the rising wind and the dry condition of the stubble and the prairie, his fields would be on fire before teams and tanks could reach them. He mounted a fresh horse and rode back to aid Bill Campbell in bringing the human beings to safety. The experienced fire-fighters immediately started the back-fires, using the Rock Creek and the plowed fire-brakes as a starting point, and, of course, burning against the wind. Suddenly Uncle Will came back, driving the McNairs on the run. He called out to me, and I got in the buck-board with him; he drove straight to the big feed barn, sixty rods north of the windmill and across Rock Creek. "Tom," he said, "do exactly what I tell you. You know I had lots of experience with getting horses out of a burning barn, when Coon Klotzpaugh's livery stable burned in Madison. Theron Davidson's two pet goats are on the north side of the big barn, and there are forty big horses in there on that side. When we get there, jump out and get the goats, as soon as you can. Steve Archimbault has gone there on Feather [a broncho]. He and I will do the rest."

The big feed barn had eighty horses, and eighty sets of harness inside. It had been supposed to be absolutely safe. However, the haymow had been filled to the roof with 250 tons of hay, and Uncle Will, through long experience, feared that this hay was generating gas, which might ignite or explode. When we reached the creek bank, I had a good view of the fire. Its flames were racing through the bunch-grass, and great strands of burning grass were whipped up in the air more than a hundred feet, and borne on ahead of the fire by the gas and draft which it generated. Uncle Will drove the McNairs on the run across the creek, and there was Steve, waiting in front of the big barn. "We must do our work before the horses are frightened by a crowd of men," he said. "A frightened horse will run right back into his stall, even though it's afire. Horses, however, will follow goats, even out of a burning barn. It seems to be some peculiarity in the goat smell that does it. You lead the goats, and lead the first team of horses right with them. Steve and I will tie them, head and tail together, and you will have a procession of forty, anyway. Go right straight down into the creek, and go southwest, down the stream. Don't turn back, and if anyone tries to interfere with you, Steve will cut him down with a rifle." There was no doubt whatever of Mr. Archimbault's ability or resolution. He had come to the Big Place from the Belle Fourche, in the Black Hills, with a letter of introduction to my father from Seth Bullock.

I started down the slope with the two goats and one team of horses, and when I looked back, I saw a real cavalcade. Uncle Will and Steve had tied halter ropes to horses' tails, and I was leading the procession. I followed Uncle Will's advice not to look back, and to pay no attention to any disturbance, but when I crossed the Big Johnson pond, in Rock Creek, near the Miner County line, I sensed that something was wrong. Soon I heard explosions that sounded like a Fourth of July cannon, and then I saw flame jet from the roof of the big feed barn. Some of the uncontrolled men had already rushed there, slightly panic stricken, though with excellent intentions. George Davidson and his crew had already got the harness sets out, when a crowd of men began to shout that "Windy" Lawrence, an asthmatic engine fireman,

who occasionally took too much grain alcohol flavored with peppermint as a remedy, was asleep in the upstairs harness room, and in danger of death by burning. Steve Archimbault expertly shinned up the pulley ropes of the giant hay-fork, kicked open the harness room door, and announced that the room was empty. Windy himself shouted in the crowd below that he was safe and present, and urged Steve to slide down the rope at once, as the roof was caving in. Twenty-seven horses became panic stricken and, in spite of many efforts to save them, rushed back into the flames and were burned to death. There was a horrible smell of burning horse-flesh, and screams of pain that sounded almost human. The big barn and all the hay and grain were burned to ashes, but the back-fire saved the wheat stacks, and the thrashing went on as usual.

Insurance

That evening Captain Palmer, who handled the insurance, came out to assure my father that the policy was in good standing, as he had paid the premium about sixty days before and charged it to the account of the Redstone Mercantile Company in his own bank, the Miner County Bank and Trust. My father got a crew to digging a trench, with plows and scrapers, and the carcasses of the burned horses were scraped in, covered with quicklime and buried in soil.

The next day, the Minneapolis representative of the insurance company called, and acknowledged the loss in full. He advised my father that the insurance company, in compliance with its policy, would immediately construct a new feed barn, an exact replica of the one destroyed, and would pay the other losses to the amount of eighty percent of the market value.

Captain Palmer was amazed when my father said, "Well, you won't need to bother about rebuilding the big feed barn. I am not going to need it again."

Captain Palmer, who had been one of Farragut's quartermasters, used his most violent expletive, "Tut, tut, Richard, you are certainly not getting discouraged or blue?"

"No," my father said. "Cap, I have been in the Dakota guessing-school too long for that. Here's the reason." And he pulled out a letter from Mr. Nugent, the great Boston horse-buyer to whom he had been consigning carloads of horses for the past ten years. Mr. Nugent advised that he had gone out of the horse business, and that the Boston express companies were installing horseless trucks propelled by gasoline-combustion engines.

"What was that poem, Cap, Mrs. Reeves recited at the Lyceum and got Libbie Clark to accompany her on the piano, about my life being in the yellow leaf?"

"Oh," said Captain Palmer, "that was one of Byron's, but he stole it from Shakespeare. Macbeth said, you know, that he had lived long enough, and his way of life was in the sere, the yellow leaf. But of course that can't apply to you, Richard."

"No," my father said, "but it applies to what the school readers call man's noblest friend, the horse. The great days of the horse are over. I only hope that it won't hurt the country too much—it is bound to do an injury to South Dakota. The days to come can't be better than the grand times of the past. But the past was based on horsepower. The future will, of course, be interesting. It can scarcely be so full of glory to an old horse raiser like myself."

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

TWO of the country's greatest daily newspapers, the New York *Herald Tribune* and the *Christian Science Monitor*, have recently published long articles dealing with the work of "the pro-Axis press in the United States." By this they mean a long list of publications, some of them of large circulation, others merely mimeographed leaflets, which in the judgment of the newspapers exposing their activities "constitute a fifth column working hard to disrupt American war unity." The most influential of these periodicals, says the writer in the *Herald Tribune*, is *Social Justice*, Father Coughlin's organ. Scattered widely over the country there is, in the opinion of Department of Justice officials, considerable evidence of unified cooperation among these publications as to the slant they give their highly varied arguments, leading to the belief that their policies are dictated from Berlin by means of the short-wave radio. And yet these publications, we are assured by the same source that exposes and criticizes their activities, have no need to worry about consequences to themselves, so far as government interference is concerned. "They operate with no attempt at secrecy, safe in the assurance that they will not be prosecuted for sedition." This assurance comes to them from no less an authoritative source than the Attorney General of the United States, Francis Biddle. By his express order, publications obviously pro-Axis in their views of the war, which blame the United States, in particular the President of the United States, for bringing the war upon the world, and one of which urges that he therefore should be hanged, are immune from prosecution. In an article in *Collier's Weekly*, the Attorney General himself says: "I have instructed that no man be arrested for sedition under Federal law except on my written instructions. Men should never, under our law, be prosecuted for their opinions, however they may disturb the beliefs we cherish or oppose the moral assumptions that most of us share."

Well, maybe Mr. Biddle is right when he thinks, and says, that the "fifth column editors and publishers do not constitute a real danger." Maybe, as he also thinks, to prosecute them "might start a witch hunt dangerous to the preservation of free speech and press." But maybe the Attorney General of the United States should be respectfully asked to reconsider his perilous assumption, by those American citizens who, while very loyal to the national principles and traditions of free speech, believe also that it is foolish and very dangerous indeed to permit the fifth-column press full liberty in war time. How can Mr. Biddle say with certainty that the fifth-column publications are not doing serious damage to American unity? This commentator fully agrees with the opinion expressed by the writer in the *Herald Tribune*, namely, that "as long as uncertainty prevails on whether they are doing damage, permitting them to continue unchecked is giving the Axis the free benefit of an important doubt."

For what they may be worth to those who may take a practical interest in this grave problem, in Washington or elsewhere, my personal opinions lead me to believe that the pro-Axis press corresponds to a very wide and growing current of American revolutionary passion, which existed before Pearl Harbor and which that event did nothing to check, except in the case of a few mouthy politicians and hangers-on of the new revolution, who at least temporarily were silenced. This American revolutionary current is akin to the national socialist movements elsewhere in Germany, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, and in several South American countries. It has an intellectual élite, of whom Lawrence Dennis is a prime example; it is made up of very diverse elements, but once leadership appears, these elements will come together. They should be dealt with now, when they are weak and scattered, and moonshine idealism in dealing with them is worse than their own poisonous influence; such toxins if allowed to spread will reproduce the fate of France in our own nation. In war time, especially this war, a Mitchell Palmer is greatly to be preferred to a Francis Biddle.

Editors' Note. *The Editors of THE COMMONWEAL do not agree with Mr. Williams's contentions in this column, and particularly with his last sentence. Full expression of this disagreement appears on page 547 of this issue.*

The Stage & Screen

A Kiss for Cinderella

I WAS born too late to be a satisfactory critic of either of last week's openings. I can't, for example, compare Luise Rainer's performance in James M. Barrie's "A Kiss for Cinderella" with Maude Adams's in 1916. I did see Miss Adams in Barrie's "Peter Pan"; I was taken as a special treat on a very early birthday; but all I can remember of the occasion is the pressure put upon me to convey appropriate delight to my parents.

I had something of the same feeling the other night at "A Kiss for Cinderella." Here was a playwright who had won considerable esteem from my elders and betters. And here was an actress with two Oscars to her credit. Obviously, it would reflect only upon myself if I allowed myself to yawn in the face of their widely-heralded conjunction.

Well, I didn't yawn. My reaction was the mild fascination I might derive from an old fashion-magazine, or from the furnishings of a Victorian parlor. Even in distant 1916, Sir James's whimsy must have had that same anti-macassar air, for all its refugee children and war hospital. In the current version, one of the refugees is a Chinese and another sings "There'll Always Be an England," but the effect of these interpolations is the opposite of their intention. Gooseberry jam in a plastic container is still gooseberry jam.

The name of the principal character is a sufficient indication of the play's tone: Miss Thing, a pneumoniac

Austrian-born London slavey who shelters refugee waifs in packing cases and dreams she is Cinderella. Prince Charming is the cockney policeman who suspects her of being a Mata Hari, and I can safely leave to your imagination the dénouement that follows Miss Thing's waking from her dream in an ambulatory hospital bed. The dream itself has considerable charm, presented in terms of Miss Thing's tenement imagination of Royalty. And the final love scene between Miss Thing and the policeman is first-grade Barrie, whereas all of the first act is, I hope, second-grade Barrie.

Miss Rainer is graceful and beguiling in the dream sequence. In other scenes, she frequently gives way to abrupt, distracting gestures, as though fighting suffocation in Sir James's jam-pot. Cecil Humphrey has no such qualms; he plays the benevolent gentleman-artist, Mr. Bodie, with full respect; and Ralph Forbes gives an appealing performance as the stalwart, blustering policeman. (*At the Music Box.*)

Priorities of 1942

BELONGING to a generation which regards vaudeville as something to be undergone before the main feature comes on, I found myself considerably mystified at Clifford Fischer's "Priorities of 1942." Although it was Monday night, the capacious Forty-Sixth Street Theater was crowded to capacity with an audience that collapsed with merriment whenever a man in a white flannel suit named Lou Holtz repeated a sentence he had just finished, or a man in a pearl gray suit named Willie Howard pretended he was someone else, or a man in a blue serge suit named Phil Baker was heckled from playing his accordion by a man whose suit I didn't catch because he was sitting over my head in a box. None of the jokes any of these delivered had anything to recommend them except a half-hearted ox-color; the burlesques weren't especially funny; and the sketches trailed off without ever coming to any particular point. But I gathered that such considerations are beside the point. What the audience was doing was adhering to certain formal rules. When an actor labeled comedian by the fact of his carrying a cane or wearing a peculiar hat squares off in a certain manner, you begin to laugh, even before he has spoken. When he speaks in a Jewish or Scotch accent, you laugh harder. And you near burst when one comedian interrupts another, or misunderstands another, or insults another. The skill of a vaudeville comedian, it appears, is governed by the length to which he can draw out a flat joke.

In between these hilarities, a chorus of cheaply-costumed lovelies dances indifferently against cheap scenery, or a girl in spangles confides an indifferent song to a microphone. This happens twice every day and three times on Saturday, and costs two dollars and twenty cents.

Through some error, however, something happens toward eleven o'clock which makes this the best bargain of the season. Evidently mistaking 46th Street for 59th, Paul Draper wanders onto the stage and offers thirty minutes of what patrons of the Plaza's Persian Room used to pawn the family silver to watch. Dancing as unique as

Draper's can't be conveyed by description. He is Nijinsky with Fred Astaire's aluminum plates on his toes. Whether he interprets "Tiger Rag" or a seventeenth century fugue, there is more wit in a single measure of his tapping than there is in all the rest of "Priorities of 1942" combined. He is prodigal with his encores, finishing with his brilliant impromptu pot-pourri of requests from the audience. He more than atones for the stale two hours that precede him.

In justice, I must mention three other bright spots: an expert octet of acrobatic roller-skaters; a comic banjoist named Gene Sheldon; and the dazzling piano pyrotechnics of Café Society's saucy chocolate Mistress of Ceremonies, Hazel Scott. (*At the Forty-Sixth Street Theater.*)

DAVID BURNHAM.

Hey-Hey in Navy, Army, Hawaii

AND I mean hey-hey. Hollywood is just getting around to releasing several films made before December 7. They are a little more frivolous than films should be right now about our army and navy. Secretary Stimson might be surprised to discover when he sees "*The Fleet's In*" that the U.S.S. *Dakota* becomes the glamor ship of the navy when one of its nicest, quietest sailors is kissed by a movie star. Shy William Holden was only asking for an autograph when the pretty star kissed him for a publicity picture. Bill is really the *Dakota's* most unworldly sailor; but since all the newspapers carry the pictures, all his shipmates think Bill's a killer-diller. In fact bets are placed in a big way that Bill can kiss the Duchess—in public too. The Duchess turns out to be Dorothy Lamour who sings at Swingland with Jimmy Dorsey and his band. Although she's described as "quite a hunk of femininity," she's wise to sailors and doesn't go around kissing guys or gobs—in public or private. The film is pretty much taken up with Bill's kissing Dottie and the misunderstandings that arise out of the project. Although this subject is worn thin in five minutes, Director Victor Schertzinger keeps things moving at a fast pace. The snappy lines are amusing when they don't strain too hard to be vulgar. Eddie Bracken, as Bill's buddy, does a couple of clever comedy scenes. He teams up well with Betty Hutton who has a fast-running comedy line and times her songs effectively. "*The Fleet's In*" is bubbling over with specialty numbers done by practically the entire cast and such entertainers as Cass Daley and Gil Lamb who steps beyond the bounds of good taste in one stunt. Although the film is rough and tumbling, it is really fairly well behaved compared to what it was as "*Sailor Beware*."

"*The Bugle Sounds*" has some fine shots of the daily routine of the army in training and particularly of the mechanized units in maneuvers. But it is mainly an example of how not to make a patriotic film. Its blubbering sentimentality wears out the audience before they have a chance to feel any nobler emotions; and its story is as corny as its acting. Be sure you like Wallace Beery before you see it because it consists mainly of views of Mr. Beery—mugging as he rides on horseback, messing over a meal, crying as he shoots his horse, fighting his way through a movement of tanks, drinking and drunk. As a hardened sergeant in a cavalry regiment, Beery with his

superior officers is very much upset when their outfit becomes mechanized. It's all supposed to be pretty sad. But of course Sgt. Beery, after threatening to quit the army, winds up with new medals on his expansive chest when he's decorated for tracking down the saboteurs who are wrecking the tanks. Sylvan Simon directed. Marjorie Main, Lewis Stone, George Bancroft and several young people, who carry on a papier-mache romance, are on hand to help Beery through his trials.

Betty Grable, Victor Mature, Jack Oakie, Thomas Mitchell and gang sing the "*Song of the Islands*." The picture is what you expect: a lot of grass skirts, gaudy technicolor, Hawaiians singing swing hula music to which Betty dances very well, Mature in a series of handsome sweaters makes love to Betty, Oakie ably assisted by Hilo Hattie carries on the comic relief (as if more were needed), and Thomas Mitchell as Dennis O'Brien is very Hollywood Irish in a very Hollywood Hawaiian locale. Walter Lang directed without even trying to be original. Mack Gordan and Harry Owens supplied the songs, most of which are quite tuneful and extol the virtues of the soft life on the sunny isles where "we eat papaya until we get papaya-eyed" and we never hear about Jello, Alka-Seltzer, Grable, double features, etc. No mention is made of the Japs. Mature finds the place dull because there are no billboards. But the finale in which the natives celebrate March 17th in O'Brien's honor ("It's Kalulah not Killarney any more") is a riot of green leis, shamrocks and hula-go-brach; and is something indeed to see in bright technicolor.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Christopher Columbus

By HARRY LORIN BINSSE

SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON has written the book for which his own special talents and affections peculiarly equip him. In "*Admiral of the Ocean Sea*" he has a magnificent theme—the heroic and tragic figure of the first "public" discoverer of America. To it he could apply his fine abilities as a historian and writer and his own deep and active love of everything nautical.¹ The product is worthy of the promise. Here is a biography of Columbus not likely to be superseded for several generations.

In such a character as Columbus's there are always mysteries. I have described him as the first *public* discoverer of America. To do this is to dispose at once of all the endless argument as to whether he was preceded by others, be they Norsemen, Saint Brendan, Breton fisher-

men or what have you. It is altogether possible—indeed certain—that during the course of the centuries other men and other ships got across the Atlantic and reached some portion of the lands and islands that make up the Americas. It is even likely that voyagers from the east got across the Pacific. But the point is that such achievements led to no permanent results. Either these mariners did not succeed in coming home again, or they attached no value to what they had chanced to find, or the countries from which they came were unable to follow up their exploits. The glory of Columbus—and the first of the mysteries in his character—is that he deliberately set out to sail across the ocean to the west, that he did this with the backing of a European court rich enough to capitalize on whatever he might discover, and that he executed his project with efficiency and dispatch, returning home to Europe only a few months after he had first set sail, and with a minimum of loss. He knew exactly what he wanted to do and set about doing it in workmanlike fashion.

The irony of the situation lies in this: true enough, he knew what he wanted to do, and furthermore he was quite convinced that he had done it. But what he really had done was entirely different from what he thought he had done. He believed (and he was certainly not the first man to believe it) that you could reach the Indies by sailing west just as well—and probably a lot easier—than you could by traveling overland east. So he set out to do what he believed was possible, and when he reached land west of Europe, he decided that he had accomplished what he set out to do. He had reached the Indies and Asia. Cuba was the Malay Peninsula, and the mountains of Honduras were the mountains of China. South America was indeed a new land, never before seen by a European, but it was a new land immediately to the south and east of Asia. There is every reason to suppose that Columbus died firmly convinced that all this was true, never for a moment suspecting that he had opened up a whole new hemisphere.

To understand how this was possible, you must have a clear idea of what Europeans then believed was the shape of the world. Here Professor Morison does a magnificent piece of work. He has eliminated for all time the absurd notion that medieval scholars thought the earth was flat. Substantially no educated men since the dawn of Greek science had believed that. It was generally assumed that the earth is a sphere, but naturally enough there was a good deal of uncertainty as to the size of the sphere. This problem resolves itself into trying to determine the length of a degree at the equator (skipping all the long history of scientific development and increase in mathematical knowledge which made possible the very concepts *degree* and *equator*). Various attempts were made to solve this problem, some of the results being amazingly accurate. Professor Morison lists these in tabular form. Aristotle's estimate for the circumference of the earth was less than a hundred nautical miles different from the best modern figure. Ptolemy, however, was almost 4,000 miles off, and Columbus based all his calculations on an even more erroneous estimate. It is probably fortunate that he did so. He believed that the world's circumference was about 5,000 miles smaller than it in fact is. Had he known the

¹ Little Brown. 2 Volumes. \$10.00. There is also a one volume edition prepared for the uses of the Book of the Month Club which sells for \$3.50. This omits all reference notes and the major part of two chapters, one on the art of navigation and the other on the origin of syphilis. It also contains somewhat fewer maps and charts. For my own taste, I greatly prefer the "definitive" edition. Many of the author's best cracks are in the notes, and the two chapters abridged to spare the sensibilities of non-technical readers are among the best in the book. But the difference in price is so great that probably the abridged edition is the better value for individual buyers. Certainly libraries should spend the extra money.

true distance between Europe and Asia by sea, the idea of sailing across so vast a space through uncharted waters might have seemed impossible. Another error likewise helped to confirm him in his belief that he had reached the Indies: his consistent over-estimate of the distances he sailed. If you couple these two errors and take into account the difficulties of celestial observation with the crude instruments and in the small ships of the day (it is still no simple art) his faith becomes readily understandable.

Why was it, you may ask, that Europe had to wait two thousand years for someone to try out practically what philosophers and scholars thought was possible? That again points to the mystery of Columbus. First of all, there was no unanimity of opinion that the thing could be safely undertaken. Some men believed that if you went beyond the top-side of the world, you would fall off. All were sceptical at the prospect of crossing so great a body of water. And those most deeply versed in astronomy and mathematics were rarely men of action, practiced navigators. This Columbus unquestionably was. He had that sort of added sense, that almost instinctive knowledge of the sea with which some men are endowed and to which Mr. Morison several times pays tribute. His navigation was based upon what sailors call "dead reckoning," which means determining your position at any given moment by means of a careful record of the distances you have traveled and the directions in which you have gone. Estimating your distances consistently (a *consistent* error will not spoil your reckoning) is in itself no mean feat in the middle of an ocean, with no standard of comparison other than your apparent movement through the water. Error is easy enough even today, with all sorts of mechanical devices to help you. Yet so skilled was Columbus at this art that he could cross the Atlantic, sail in and out along hundreds of miles of islands, and then return with an error of less than a hundred miles in his landfall. On the third voyage he sailed west, deliberately bearing south to strike the unknown continent he suspected lay in those parts, ranged its unknown coast, then set a course northerly for the island of Hispaniola and hit it almost on the nose.

In addition to this skill at handling ships, he had a considerable amount of book learning and a passionate conviction that he could do what, so far as he knew, had never been deliberately done before. There is no accounting for such conviction. It is often found coupled with a very strong religious faith, and this certainly was true of Columbus. Professor Morison is very positive on this point, and very convincing. Columbus not only was a Catholic in a nominal sense; he was a very devout Catholic. He said the Office daily. He used Holy Writ with perfect familiarity. One of the reasons he most constantly urged for his project was that it would help to make up the losses Christendom had suffered at the hands of the Turks in the Near East. When all else failed, he trusted in God to come to his rescue.

So you have in this Genoese the perfect instrument to accomplish what he did accomplish: a man of great practical skill, considerable theoretical knowledge and unshatterable faith. That eminence is in itself a mystery, if only because so few men are cut to such a pattern. And

that eminence is a safe guarantee that jealousy and hatred will play their troublesome parts. Mr. Morison thinks that Columbus's Italian birth helped to make Spaniards dislike him; I suspect that this was far more a handle for their natural and human reaction to the man's pre-eminence. And essentially it was not the calumnies circulated against him which made his tragedy, but rather the fault in him which made him assume that the abilities leading to success in one department would equally lead to success in another. However great a navigator he may have been, Columbus as a colonizer and ruler over subject peoples was a miserable failure. To say that no one else would have done better, that Europeans had to learn the hard way before they would know how to do such things, in no way diminishes the extent of the failure.

In a sense, of course, and very neatly, Columbus's dealings with the Indians epitomize the terrible burden of blunders for which white men are now beginning to pay. He set the classic pattern. What the Portuguese had done in Africa or the Atlantic islands, what the Spaniards were doing in the Canaries was small time stuff compared to what happened in Hispaniola. The Indians were regarded first of all as means to gain economic ends, secondarily as subjects for missionary activity. Columbus himself had sincere hopes for their souls, and no compassion whatever for their bodies. When he was disappointed at the amount of gold to be found in Hispaniola, and when the "spices" he had brought home proved commercially worthless, he did not hesitate to try to make the venture profitable by shipping back natives to be sold as slaves. And if a man of his stature and piety could act in such fashion, it requires little imagination to conceive how less scrupulous subordinates would act. A few simple figures tell the story. In 1492 there were probably about 300,000 Tainos in Hispaniola. Sixteen years later there were only 60,000 left. In 1548, "Oviedo doubted whether 500 Indians remained." Professor Morison draws a moral: "The fate of this gentle and almost defenseless people offers a terrible example to Americans who fancy they will be allowed to live in peace by people overseas who covet what they have." It seems to me that there are several additional morals, perhaps too obvious to point out.

In all fairness it must be said that never again did the Spaniards equal the enormity of their record on Hispaniola; protest—and effective protest—came from such great Christians as Las Casas. But other Europeans, particularly the English colonists, would in time do just as badly. Even to this day there has been little change in principle. The great difference is merely that white men have learned the folly of exploiting subject peoples so intensively as to destroy them: no sensible farmer works his horse to death. It is possible that the present war may force us all to cut more to the heart of the problem and learn the lesson mankind most persistently refuses—that human beings are ends, not means, and that the violation of this truth brings with it tragic punishments, even to the third and fourth—and tenth—generation.

Those are just a few of the reflections aroused by "Admiral of the Ocean Sea." It is, quite apart from such

matters, a grand book. The writing is easy, flowing, witty. The physical descriptions are vivid and infused with deep knowledge and love. Anyone who has the least feeling for boats and the sea, for "all trades, their gear and tackle and trim," will feel blessedly at home in these pages. Of course the fact that the author himself has sailed over many of Columbus's courses in boats of roughly equivalent size gives his writing a richness which would never have been possible if his researches had been limited to the written word.

Bluff and commonsensical, also, is his whole historical approach. He loves to tear aside the cobwebs of historic fantasy. Modern national pride could not endure the facts. Surely Columbus was *not* a simple artisan's son from Genoa. He must have been a Spaniard or a Portuguese or a Jew—or something more extraordinary. With all such notions Mr. Morison has no patience. He takes things as he finds them and tells history. And he tells it with reverence for the sacred and a proper grain of salt for the profane.

Books of the Week

Meditation in Disaster

Flight to Arras. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Translated by Lewis Galantière. Illustrated by Bernard Lamotte. Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.75.

"WHY, in the midst of defeat, do I and my kind continue to take the risk of defeat?"

In the fateful last days of May, 1940, Captain Antoine de Saint-Exupéry of the French Air Reconnaissance was ordered to make a sortie over enemy-occupied territory. The mission was meaningless; the chances were less than one in three that he would return; and if he should, his findings would never reach the General Staff; and even if by some miracle they might, there would be no way to make use of them. But so long as there is a war, one must act, even if one act blindly. "Orders are given for the sacrifice of the air arm because war must be made to look like war."

"Very good, Sir." No time now for speculation: "If I am alive, I shall do my thinking tonight." With his observer and gunner, Saint-Exupéry takes off. First a photographic sortie at 33,000 feet (60 below zero) over a section "categorically blocked" by the enemy. His controls—because of the ineffectuality of the French war machine—are frozen when a squadron of nazi fighters spots him from 1,500 feet—ten seconds—below. Straining to free the rudder, he overdraws his dole of oxygen and loses all but the last shred of consciousness. But the enemy wasps decelerate when they try to climb against the rare atmosphere, and fall back.

And now the second chapter of the mission: down to 2,000 feet to photograph the German tank parks around flaming Arras. At this altitude, too low to bail out, he is within range of every caliber of anti-aircraft. In the dusk, tracer bullets and explosions enclose him in a cage of unearthly beauty, piercing his wings, his petrol tanks.

But all at once, miraculously, he is clear. Homing to his base—will it still be there?—he flies over roads clotted with insect-like refugees: the hopeless, senseless decomposition of a whole people. Obeying a last automatic reflex,

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his countrymen aim random shots at the indistinct machine overhead.

Unquestionably, Saint-Exupéry has compressed within his narrative of a single day the most graphic and persuasive account to date—and probably to come—of the fall of France. Especially haunting are his descriptions of the refugees ("Somewhere in the north of France a boot had scattered an ant-hill") and of the nightmare aura of defeat: "Commonly, people believe that defeat is characterized by a general bustle and a feverish rush. Bustle and rush are the signs of victory, not of defeat. . . . Defeat is a thing of weariness, of incoherence, of boredom. And above all of futility."

But action is only the shell of Saint-Exupéry's book, and his message is the opposite of futility. What he seeks on every page is an answer to the question I quoted at the head of my review; and among the bursting shells over Arras, the answer arrives in a mystic visitation which translates itself when, returned to his base, he walks the deserted village highway, alone with "Night, the beloved."

Man risks death because it is only by sacrificing his individual self that he can achieve the peace that arrives from community. "Sacrifice signifies neither amputation nor repentance. It is in essence an act. It is the gift of oneself to the being of which one forms part. Only he can understand what a farm is, what a country is, who shall have sacrificed part of himself to his farm or country, fought to save it, struggled to make it beautiful."

The loss of Man's dignity, Saint-Exupéry's inner voice continued, is postulated upon the loss of his faith in God: "Man was created in the image of God. God was revered in Man. Men were brothers in God. It was this reflec-

tion of God that conferred an inalienable dignity upon every man." Humanism sought to define Man by the qualities of men. It abandoned "the notion of sacrifice whereby God is created in the hearts of men. . . . Little by little we lost our heritage. . . . We have defined our liberty as a sort of vague license limited only at the point where one man does injury to another."

In short, Saint-Exupéry's vision suggests a return to God. But he does not interpret it thus. Mounting a rostrum, he preaches "my civilization" as "the inheritor of God." In place of men equal in God, men equal in Man; in place of the respect for God present in every individual, the respect for Man present in every individual; in place of charity as a gift to God present in the individual, charity as a gift to Man present in the individual.

Shall we call this blasphemy? Or verbalism? Endow "Man" with all of God's attributes, and you have merely changed God's name. Saint-Exupéry's vision is the orthodox Christian ethic, once again manifesting its authority to absolve man from despair. DAVID BURNHAM.

BIOGRAPHY

The Emancipation of a Freethinker. Herbert Ellsworth Cory. Bruce. \$3.00.

THIS is part of the Science and Culture Series, and is typed by the general editor as the intellectual odyssey of an agnostic in search for evidence for God, His revelation, His Church in the environment of the modern secular university. It gives an account of the author's intellectual pursuits at Brown, Harvard, California and Johns Hopkins, and ranges through the fields of literature and criticism, sociology, biology, psycho-

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analysis, physics. There are hardly any controversial problems in these fields on which he has not quite a settled opinion. There is scarcely any leading scientist whose work in science is not brought up for review, and moreover submitted to judgment. Finally, in the last three chapters, he covers fundamental theology (the problem of evil, the historicity of Christ, the credentials of the Synoptic and Saint John's Gospels, infallibility and supremacy), Church history (comparative religion, early sects, the Eastern and Western Schisms, the Protestant reformation, the age of enlightenment, the relation of Church and State), and dogmatic theology. All of this within three hundred pages.

The "odyssey" is none too clear and does not give the help we need to understand the attitude of the non-Catholic toward the Church. It is extremely difficult to distinguish between afterthought and the original response of the author in his varied contacts with material and spiritual phenomena. Actually, the "quest" appears to be for the most part a literary form which enables the author to recreate for his readers the various "hovels" of wisdom in which he has tarried, and to point out some of the unbalanced characters who dwell therein. However, the subjects which this book covers are too scattered, their position and relevancy on the map to Rome not always apparent, their treatment often too technical for the general reader and too superficial for a trained one, their movement too weighted with quotation. Students in many fields will probably take fresh courage from the author's allegiance to Thomism and Thomists. Yet this allegiance at times becomes obsequiousness; the reader wishes that it might have been more dispassionate, less sectarian—philosophic in the spirit of Saint Thomas.

There is no doubt that the spirit of this book may be readily acclaimed by Catholics, but for that very reason they must examine it with care and prudence. Does it protect an ideology, in the technical meaning of that term? Is not the concept of what allegiance to the Church demands considerably distorted? "Catholic instructors" find it easy to build up a strong realization of "the inadequacy of Protestantism," "the Protestant travesty of philosophy and theology," the responsibility of non-Catholic philosophers for the loss of Saint Thomas's notions, their delusion with the "crazy economic, political, and metaphysical sophistries of our generation." Too often we have glib epithets for every non-Catholic philosopher, scientist and social reformer whose name we mention, but on the other hand, only lowly and devout heads before all phases of the "Catholic Counter-Reformation." Somehow we are still oblivious of the implications of the papal program for liturgical (not to say theological) and social reform, and for positive social action by socially dynamic members of the Mystical Body. Isn't there need for humility, too, in our scientific and social thinking? What Dr. Cory says in another context might be applied here: "How easy it is to blend humble uncertainty with arrogant and obsessive negativism." But how much Catholic writing is done in that same spirit—of which this book itself suffers. In it practically every attempt at a scientific argument against those who are made to run the gauntlet for being "silly," "uncritical," "amateurish," "prejudiced," etc., is sublimated with appeals to authority or vituperation. Three or four times the "so-called democracies" are marshalled in for condemnation; there is no trial, however, no weighing of evidence.



DARK SYMPHONY



By Elizabeth Laura Adams

The war has made us painfully aware of how far from solved the entire negro question is. This is a key-point for our enemies; and more important, it is a point made only too often against the Catholic Church. Miss Adams is a Catholic convert and a negress. In her autobiography she does what can be done to bridge the abyss of races and the still greater abyss of faith and unfaith. She writes with a style that tells. **\$2.50**

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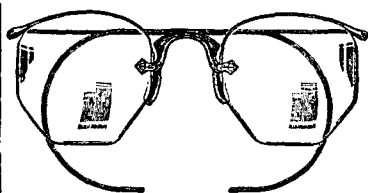
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Unquestionably all of us—Protestants, Jews and Catholics—need constantly to be reexamining our positions, deepening our conviction, and sanctifying our faiths. We need constantly to be applying the sword to our spirit, the spirit of our letters, the spirit of our science, the spirit of our religious convictions. But the sword itself is the Spirit, and the Spirit is Love. The Spirit breathing upon the waters of Christendom might generate in our minds a calm passion for reflecting the truth. How else can the breath of Romanism become for science and letters the odor of sanctity, which is also the odor of sacrifice. By the spirit of sacrifice in science we will dedicate ourselves to the truth, wherever it is found, in the name of the Truth Who proceeds in the image of the Father. To the extent that this book needlessly offends "Protestants, atheists and agnostics," as the general editor suggests that it might, or reconfirms others in the spirit of arrogance, it will fall short of Dr. Cory's purpose, the emancipation of free thinkers.

DANIEL M. CANTWELL.

Bride of Glory. Being the strange story of Emy Lyon, a blacksmith's daughter, who married his Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Naples and became Emma, Lady Hamilton, companion of royalty and true friend of Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, K.C.B., Duke of Bronte. By Bradda Field. Greystone. \$3.00.

IN THIS 960-page story of Lord Nelson's paramour, Miss Field, beside giving due prominence to Emma's real passion for Charles Greville, avidly describes her seduction by Captain Willett Payne and her life as mistress of a Sussex Baronet. Brought to London as a servant girl when she was but fifteen, Emma's exquisite beauty was handmaid to her ambitions, but it is much to her credit that she preferred Greville's elegant frugality and intellect to the aimless prodigality of her first "protectors." Had she been faithful to any of the three, she might be classed as no worse than some of the modern recidivists to the divorce courts. "You are too beautiful to remain alone," said Greville, "therefore how wise to avow your manner of life, and if you conduct yourself without giddiness, there is no reason why you should not be respected." So shrewdly did Emma heed this advice when Greville got her off his hands by shipping her and her mother out to his elderly cousin, Sir William Hamilton, British Minister in Naples, that even before Sir William obtained George III's permission to marry Mrs. Emma Hart, she had been received in the lax Neapolitan society. When she returned triumphantly from London in 1790 as My Lady, a private audience with the Queen was the beginning of a devoted friendship, as unfortunate to the cause of justice in Naples, as timely for the Bourbons then misruling the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Ferdinand I, a moral and mental degenerate, was proud of his title of King of the Beggars, a majority of the urban population, whom he bribed and bullied with "Festa, Forza, Farina" (Holidays, Gallows, Flour). He, in turn, was bullied by his wife, Caroline, sister of Marie Antoinette—and a typical Hapsburg—who shared with Emma a consuming hatred of the French who were trying to introduced some liberal ideas into Italy at the point of the bayonet. Lady Hamilton was now a fairly trained musician; she could converse in five languages and understood the outward usages of good society but, while she could pose in countless enchanting Greek "attitudes," no one had taught her any

ethical values and she preened herself ecstatically in the smiles of rotting royalty.

After the Battle of the Nile, which gave England mastery of the Mediterranean, Naples welcomed Nelson in a delirium of glory. Emma made him her hero and Sir William, then sixty-eight, accepted a triangular intimacy. Caroline was persuaded by Emma to open the Sicilian ports to the British fleet and, a thrall both to worshipping beauty and Tory snobbery, Nelson condoned and abetted the Bourbon's extermination of the liberal survivors of the Parthenopean Republic. Southey admits a very ugly blot on his career was Nelson's refusal to accept the terms of surrender, signed by the French in the Fort of St. Elmo, with Cardinal Ruffo and the Turkish, Russian and British commanders, when he turned the French troops over to the vengeance of the rabble. The author, who writes from the point of view of Emma, makes no comments. If the title be taken at face value, it would seem a commendation of the heroine. Obviously overwhelmed by a plethora of material, Miss Field has a habit of inserting as conversation informative paragraphs that seem fresh culled from the encyclopedia, and her presentation of historical events is blurred and confusing. In her vistas of society, the candles are always guttering, pomade and sweat trickle down from the perukes, and, if her English scenes are more freely described, so also are the stench of London. The book closes with the return of the Hamiltons to England in 1800, and a hint is given that a sequel may be entitled "Guardian Angel." As Lady Hamilton's fame and fortune lay in her lovely face, it would have seemed more intelligent to leave her to Romney.

E. V. R. WYATT.

FICTION

The Moon Is Down. John Steinbeck. Viking. \$2.00.

MR. STEINBECK combines something of the technique of the drama with the purpose of the essay in his new novel. An invading enemy, striking with care and competence, quickly overcomes an unnamed country. So well-planned and executed is the attack that the defenders are vanquished before they know what has happened. Mr. Steinbeck is not interested in describing the war but in depicting the plight of the conquered and that of the conquerors. Readers will, of course, identify Colonel Lanser and his staff with Nazi soldiers and Mayor Orden and Doctor Winter with civilian Americans. But there is no need to do so, for the occupation of a once-free country by a hostile force is a timeless situation. The question propounded is this: can force overcome freedom?

The sullen obedience of the conquered at length breaks into sporadic revolt. The familiar devices of oppression such as starvation, slavery and the firing squad serve only to consolidate the insurrection of a few, which, toward the end of the book, threatens to become open rebellion. Force, then, does not defeat a free people, it merely goads them to action.

Mr. Steinbeck's faith in the people is deeply intuitive. Mayor Orden, Doctor Winter, and Annie, the cook, possess some means of communication with those pools of wisdom lying deep in the consciousness of men and women. In critical moments they are able to draw upon this source, confuting the guile of their oppressors by means of their simple but subtle understanding of right. There are no heroics in their retaliations; there is rather that quiet heroism of Socrates, whose noble words to his accusers are quoted. About to be led to the wall, Mayor Orden remem-

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IS MODERN CULTURE DOOMED? By Andrew J. Krzesinski, Ph.D., S.T.D. Foreword by the Right Reverend G. Barry O'Toole. A timely book for the serious student of world affairs. Written by a Polish cleric and scholar from the University of Cracow, with a background of travel and study in Europe and the Orient. (Devin-Adair) _____\$2.00

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bers his school-boy declamation: "I prophesy to you who are my murderers that immediately after my departure punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you." That there will be others to take up the responsibilities of continuing resistance is covertly suggested in his final words to Doctor Winter, "Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius. . . . Will you remember to pay the debt?"

CHARLES DUFFY.

The Ivory Mischief. Arthur Meeker, Jr. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.75.

THIS is, almost boastfully, a *tour de force*. The author has taken actual names, actual diary entries, actual documents from the era of Louis XIV and has, by his own statement, blended actual dialogue and incident in a seven hundred page report on the lives and loves of two "ladies" of the court. The graceless grandeur of their days, their breakfast "thoughts," their daily "activity," and their midnight liaisons are recounted at dulling length against a slow-moving background of national politics and intrigue, from their youth to an unrepentant senility. Objectively, the book achieves the author's purpose. However, the journey of these nonentities reads like a seventeenth century French novel, a dictaphone report from an eighteenth century salon, and a translation of a countess's secret memoirs by one of the *fin de siècle* group of late but unlamented memory.

HISTORY

The Myth of the Negro Past. Melville J. Herskovits. Harper. \$4.00.

FOR almost two decades, now, Dr. Herskovits has struggled with the Negro Question, and out of it has brought gems of information. This time the good man has plunged into the Negro's past as no other scholar has done. The book is too long and involved to be popular—that is to say, the masses will hardly read it with understanding for many moons—but it should go on the shelves of professional as well as amateur students of America's colored one-tenth.

Dr. Herskovits has given us an outline of popular nonsense about the Negro, *viz*: 1) "Negroes are naturally of a childlike character . . . in contrast to the American Indians who preferred extinction to slavery"; 2) "Only the poorer stock was enslaved . . ."; 3) "Since the Negroes were brought from all points of the African continent, spoke diverse languages . . . no least common denominator of understanding of behavior could have possibly been worked out by them"; 4) ". . . The cultures of Africa were so savage and relatively so low in the scale of human civilization that the apparent superiority of European customs . . . would have caused and actually did cause them to give up such aboriginal traditions as they may otherwise have desired to preserve; 5) The Negro is thus a man without a past.

It is well worth while that Catholics interested in Negro life read this book, for many inter-racial movements, Protestant and Catholic alike, have floundered about on the five points that Dr. Herskovits has outlined. Too often well-meaning people have been dead-set on leading the Negro by the hand when, as a matter of fact, the Negro wanted opportunity to lead himself according to his own inherent—spare the word—traits and abilities. Instead of helping the Negro adjust himself, many people have weakened the Negro by making him ashamed of himself.

Of particular interest to Catholics is that oft-repeated sentence to be found in the chapter "Africanisms in Religious Life" (this is not an exact quote, I record it from the memory of my own childhood): "Less'n a Negro is a Baptist or a Methodist, or maybe if he's out of Black Bottom and a Holy Roller, if he is a Presbyterian, or a Congregationalist, or a Episcopalian, or a Catholic, then, Brother, he's been tampered with." If there is anything that needs to be driven home to American Catholics, it is this fact, that the Negro does not react as favorably to the Irish emotions as he does to the Spaniard's, to the Frenchman's, or to the Italian's. There are, of course, leaders of the Church who interpret this fact not without bias; the Latins are less godly than the Irish, and so on. But there are many trenchant passages in Dr. Herskovits's book that can be read with profit even if not in absolute agreement.

For example, consider the place in family life of the African mother, and, to the glory of this book, the recognition of the translation to the American Negro of the same quality. Harry L. Binsse accurately observed the trend among Washington's colored Catholics to talk small words to small people (THE COMMONWEAL, "Bond of Unity," January 30, 1942), and to achieve great things. We can be certain that the enthusiasm of Negro women made the participation of the Negro Protestant clergy possible. But what about Catholic Negro women? Let us hope that this natural emotionalism is not destroyed in the belief that a colored man is not cultured unless he sits stiffly and grimly; and not Catholic unless he flitters about in grave piety.

Down in New Orleans there are Negro (sometimes Creole) Catholics who go about doing good deeds without making a mess of it. There are good trade-union leaders, too. In spite of the Jim Crow and race hatred that white Catholics had imbibed in their struggle to get on top with white non-Catholics, the possibilities of a cultural revival seem greater there, where people of African descent are allowed to retain something of a culture eons older, no matter how "inferior" and inefficient, in a modern mechanical world. In short, why are black people of the Caribbean and South American countries at home in the Church, while in these United States, well, read some of Father LaFarge's statistics!

Dr. Herskovits makes it possible to discuss these questions by giving us leads to a great store of material. There are great scholars within the Church, of course, who can help Dr. Herskovits tremendously. Father Edwin Ryan suggested as much in reviewing James G. Leyburn's "The Haitian People" (THE COMMONWEAL, March 6, 1942). On the other hand, Negro life in Haiti during the breaking of communications with the Holy See can be used effectively as a refutation of Dr. Herskovits if we ignore the arguments advanced by Mary M. Colum (*re* James Joyce) and Dorothy Canfield Fisher (*re* Negroes), both in THE COMMONWEAL, March 13, 1942. Either we believe a "foreign" culture worth retaining or we do not. Much depends upon one's cultural flexibility, a flexibility which when possessed by a weak man might lead to his social and spiritual disintegration.

Finally, we might conclude that one of the grave problems of the American Negroes lies in the starchy, bourgeois (in a non-Marxian sense) education dispensed by four decades of starry-eyed, unrealistic school generations. Certainly the past two decades have been torn with strife, and the woods have become haunted with Negro scholars

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YOUTH GUIDANCE. By Kilian J. Hennrich, O.F.M.Cap. "This is a new book by an old authority on that most important of the 'ologies—Boyology. Fr. Hennrich has well spent his priestly life among youth and for youth. In the course of these profitable decades he has acquired a wealth of experience in the proper guidance of teen-age citizens of the masculine gender."—*America*. (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 53 Park Place, N. Y. C.)—\$2.25

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST. Whitford-Klein version. "Lovers of books or of good writing, friends of the IMITATION will accord this edition the complete reception it so inherently merits."—*Ave Maria*. In literary style and beauty of format, this is the outstanding edition for today. Here is an Easter gift that will always be cherished. (Harper)—\$3.00

hell-bent on making the masses of Negroes as "white" as possible, emotionally if not culturally and actually. It might be far better in the long run to allow black people who are white emotionally to be white socially in order to allow the masses of Negro Southerners who are emotionally African to bend their talents to survival in a land that would be fruitful if cultivated with an eye on good agricultural practices. Dr. Herskovits gives much room for great speculation.

GEORGE STREATOR.

PHILOSOPHY

The Mind of the Maker. Dorothy L. Sayers. Harcourt. \$2.00.

MISS SAYERS, author of really distinguished detective stories, and an enthusiastic High Anglican, has given us a surprising book, aimed at illustrating the doctrine of the Trinity by an analytical study of man's creative activity in art and particularly in imaginative literature. Gratifying as it would be to find in her work a contribution to the analogical aspect of Trinitarian theology, this reviewer is obliged to state that Miss Sayers' results, in spite of her zeal and intelligence, are dubious and obscure, as far as her main purpose is concerned.

The comparison of the powers of the soul to the Persons of the Holy Trinity is a familiar one. Saint Augustine, its author, compares the mind's generation of an idea of itself to the begetting of the son (called "the Word" and "Image of God" in Scripture), and the love which unites thinker and thought to the Holy Spirit. Though this analogy neither demonstrates nor fully explains the essential mystery, it is highly illuminating. Miss Sayers, however, uses much less well-chosen terms. She compares

the "Creative Idea" to the Father (though "idea" is much more applicable to the Son), the "Creative Energy" (also spoken of as "self-awareness") to the Son, and the "Creative Power," "the thing that flows back to the writer from his own activity," to the Spirit. All of which is far from being clear or even consistent. How, for instance, can an "energy," as such, be also "self-awareness"? And how can a "power" be in real contrast to an "energy"?

Here, as throughout the book, the author, in a series of comparisons with various aspects of literary creation, shows her belief that the Trinity is primarily, not to say necessarily, manifested in the process of creation. This, however, is a serious misunderstanding. For though theologians speak constantly of creation "by the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Ghost," this is an instance of "appropriation," whereby what is essentially common to the whole Trinity, as are all of God's external works, is ascribed to one Person in particular. Absolutely speaking, the only distinctions between the Persons are those constituted by their relationships with each other, which are totally independent of creation, though imperfect analogies may be found in creatures. In these and other ways, Miss Sayers' theology is questionable or mistaken.

Her discussion of creative writing, however, is often keen and suggestive. This is notably true when she points out that to deal with experience as a series of "problems," to be definitely and finally "solved" in a single way, is possible only in detective stories, which "solve" problems by ignoring their insoluble aspects. To deal with real life in this way, as moderns characteristically try to do, is to be ultimately baffled. Above all, there is no solution, in this world's terms, of the supreme problem of death. The

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alternative is to "deal creatively" with life's situations, as the artist does with his materials, by "making something new." For "good can only redeem, but cannot abolish," the evil in human nature. This thought can lead to spiritually valuable conclusions. T. LAWRASON RIGGS.

Christian Crisis. M. de la Bedoyere. Macmillan. \$1.75.

THE overhanging dark clouds of pain, disaster and death, the impending doom of dear things are the evil consequence, the last and bitter fruit of the progressive secularization of the West: the withdrawal of Europe from its Christian moorings. Shall the roots of the new civilization be fed by the living waters of Christianity, or have these springs become so dry that the little remaining water must be stored and used only for narrower purposes?

Capitalism, liberalism, communism, fascism and nazism have failed, and their emptiness stands revealed for all to see. But hasn't Christianity also failed? Says de la Bedoyere, "For a thousand or more years the civilized world has been Christian, and what has it got to show for it? . . . Worse still, the Western world has in the last half century boasted of large numbers, not merely of baptized Catholics, members of a spiritually rejuvenated Church, brilliantly led by a series of the best Popes in history, and what effect have they had upon the world? If Christianity is to be considered the hope of the future, it can only be after it has satisfactorily explained why it has failed to be the salvation of the past, and pointed out what steps it has taken to improve upon its previous performance. . . ."

In the second part of the book, the author offers suggestions for improving the world's return to a modern Christendom, without the defects of its medieval counterpart. We are urged to overhaul Catholic education; to strengthen national churches, whether they be Catholic or not; and to cooperate with men and movements which, despite their apparent agreement or disagreement with us, are in reality moving in the same direction. All parties should respect their differences and cooperate on all matters where they "happen to be moving in the same direction." Success in the building of a Christian order, an order that recognizes and proclaims the existence of God, that upholds and acts according to the moral law, and that respects the dignity and rights of all persons, depends not so much upon papal or episcopal pronouncements or upon greater piety among the clergy and faithful. It will be achieved, predicts de la Bedoyere, "By enlightened Christian minds . . . working in secular capacities and for secular ends and yet insisting at whatever cost in reconciling within themselves a full secular life and yet a full religious or spiritual life so that they stand out as single minded Christian persons."

As for his theory of collaborating with those who are going our way, the question arises what is our way, our destination? Surely the temporal destination that the Christian democrats are struggling and working for differs from the régime that de la Bedoyere and the other Christian semi-fascists would like to see. We want a Christian democratic, modern Christendom; he wants an authoritarian Christendom. That is why he backed Hitler and Il Duce and Franco. It is idle to conceal that de la Bedoyere's standing as an authority on politics and an interpreter of political events has suffered not a little. That Christian democracy has any connection with a truly modern Christendom is an idea remote from de la Bedoyere's mind.

JOSEPH CALDERON.

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Next Week

JAPAN OVER AUSTRALIA, by James G. Murtagh, a first-hand account by one of the editors of the Melbourne Advocate of the terrain for the opening phases of the battle for Australia. It tells of some of the natural barriers that will be most useful to General MacArthur. It is a highly colorful account of normal activities and preparedness on the huge island of New Guinea, in such remote but important cities as Darwin, Wyndham and Broome, etc. Don't miss this timely article next week.

DOUBLE CROSS, by Evelyn Waugh, clever English novelist, is a sample from his latest book, "Put Out More Flags," to be published in this country April 13. It is an amusing episode which conveys the flavor of this sly narrative about an English smart set which finally begins to rise to the occasion.

DOCTOR WARSAW, by John J. O'Connor, is an intimate personal sketch of Dr. Isidor Warsaw, executive director of Vocational Adoption, Inc., who in the past few years "has persuaded scores of leading industrial, commercial and financial leaders not only to hire but to 'adopt' 661 'self-dependent' young people." Read the fascinating story of how this public-spirited American enables orphans to get a good start toward livelihood.

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The Inner Forum

Land and Home

WITH its March issue the official quarterly of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference appears under its new title, *Land and Home*. Monsignor Luigi Ligutti, Executive Secretary of the Conference, continues as editor with Mr. Eugene S. Geissler as Associate Editor and Sister M. Irena, O.S.B., of St. Benedict's College, St. Joseph, Minn., as Art Editor. The Conference itself has moved to permanent headquarters at 3801 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa.

In announcing the new name, Monsignor Ligutti quotes Pius XII's allocution of June 1, 1941: "Of all the goods that can be the object of private property none is more conformable to nature than the *land*, the *holding* on which the family lives and from the products of which it draws all or part of its subsistence. . . . Only that stability which is rooted in one's own holding makes of the *family* the vital and most fecund cell of society."

Emphasis in the new quarterly while philosophical in background will be increasingly in the practical sphere. New features include: "Whole Wheat" and "Cracked Corn." Both of these present brief commentaries in support of the Conference program from a wide range of sources. In the current issue the first of these departments quotes Cardinal O'Connell, Wheeler McMillen, Charles Dudley Warner, Thomas à Kempis, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Secretary of Agriculture Wickard, Christopher Hollis, Monsignor Ligutti, Henry Clay, Thomas Jefferson, the *Weekly Review* (formerly *GK's Weekly*), etc. "Cracked Corn" which is made up of somewhat longer excerpts quotes such periodicals and books as the *Land Policy Review*, *Columbia*, the *Maritime Cooperator*, the *Pastor's Journal*, "The Transmission of Farming as an Occupation," Department of Agriculture clip sheets.

The current issue also contains several personal narratives of actual farming experiences, a short story by Albert Eisle, an article on the Classics and Agriculture by Sister M. Bede Donelan of St. Teresa's College of Winona, the Rural Pastor's Page and many shorter features.

CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. Wilfrid PARSONS, S.J., writes from Carroll House, Catholic University, Washington, D. C. Father Parsons was for many year editor of *America* and is the author of a number of books, the last being "Which Way Democracy?"

Franz WERFEL is an Austrian novelist now living in the United States. Prior to his departure from France, he made a vow that if he should reach safety he would write "The Song of Bernadette." His vow is now fulfilled in the book of this title from which we print an excerpt. It is the Book of the Month Club choice for June.

T. D. LYONS continues his series of reminiscences of early days in the Dakotas; he is a graduate of Notre Dame University and lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Rev. Daniel M. CANTWELL is a Catholic priest at present at the Catholic University.

E. V. R. WYATT is the drama critic of *The Catholic World*.

Charles DUFFY teaches English at Cornell University.

George STREATOR is at present working for the Federal Government in connection with problems of Negro employment on defense contracts.

Joseph CALDERON is a New York attorney, at present in the United States Army.